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CONTENTS:

	PAGE.
ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, MEETING 1—24	1
FORTIETH ANNUAL MEETING	43
ANNUAL REPORT	44
REPORTS OF SECTIONS	52
ELECTION OF OFFICERS	58
SOCIOLOGICAL CIRCULAR	59
THE CENTRAL BASIN OF TENNESSEE. By WILLIAM KENNEDY	64
THE WESTERN DENES. By REV. A. G. MORICE, O. M. I.	109
LETTER FROM A. B. PERRY, INSPECTOR N. W. MOUNTED POLICE	175
CRITICAL NOTE ON MAMMALIA OF CANADA. By E. E. THOMPSON	178

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THE WESTERN DÉNÉS—THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

By the Rev. Father A. G. Morice, O.M.I., Stuart's Lake, B.C.

So far, very little and, to my knowledge, no reliable information has ever been published concerning the ethnology and sociology of the Indian tribes inhabiting that northern part of British Columbia originally known as New Caledonia. It is not because they have been altogether ignored by English-speaking ethnographers; but for one reason or another, whenever they are attended to in scientific papers, it has never been with satisfactory accuracy. No later than four years ago the Smithsonian Report contained a paper on Anthropology by Otis T. Mason, wherein I found[1] the following, purporting to be a classification of the "Tinneh or Athabaskan"[2] tribes, including the Western Dénés.

Western Tinneh.

Kai'-yūh-kho-ta'nā.
Ko-yu'kŭkh-o-tā'-nā.
Un'-ā kho-tā'-na.

Kut-chin Tribes.

Ten'-an-kūt-chin'.
Tennŭth-kŭt-chin'.
Tat-sah'-kŭb-chin'.
Kŭt-chā-kŭt-chin'.
Nahsit'-kŭb-chin'.
Vunta'-kŭb-chin'.
Hai-ăn-kub-chin'.

[1]First part of the Report, etc., for 1885, page 832.

[2]At the risk of appearing unnecessarily fastidious may I be allowed to remark here that either term, Tinneh or Athabaskan, seems ill chosen to designate that vast family of aborigines they are made to represent? Athabascan is local and consequently should not be applied to the whole stock, whilst Tinneh, if anything, does not mean what it is intended for. Indian languages, especially that of the tribes in question, are exceedingly delicate, and a very light phonetic shade, which the uninitiated will often fail to perceive, always changes the sense of the word. Tinneh, which evidently stands here for Déné, "men" (the name most of the tribes call themselves by) would rather remind a Western Déné of the berry of what is vulgarly called "kinnikinik" (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) than of the genus *homo!* Others give them the name of Tinné, calling them thereby "Four" persons).

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Eastern Tinneh.

K'nai-a-kho-tana.
Ah-tenā'.

Nehannees.

Abbā-to-tenāh.
Acheto-tinneh.
Khŭn-um-āh.'

Carriers.

"Takŭlli."
Tsilkotinneh.

Now, I daresay the learned Professor has been misinformed, inasmuch as Dr. W. H. Dall's list, which he quotes and seems to adopt is incorrect and incomplete. It is incorrect because, among other things, it puts down the Tsilkotinneh (or more correctly Chilhχotins) as belonging to the Carriers (Taχelh, not "Takulli") from whom they are distinct. Moreover, those tribes noted under the title of "Western Tinneh" have no existence but on paper. As for the Nehannees, I suppose Dr. Dall means the Nah-anés; but I strongly suspect that the seven "Kut-chin" tribes, which he gives as specifically different, are only so many sub-divisions of the same tribe, all of whom speak the same dialect probably with local idiomatic peculiarities. Indeed, their very name, not to speak of reliable authorities, would lead me to form this opinion. "Kut-chin"[1] is a verbal suffix which, when in connection with a denominative name is expressive not of ethnological variety, but of topographical location. Its appearance at the end of certain words denotes that the aborigines who designate themselves thereby are philologically, and thereby ethnographically, so homogeneous as to preclude the possibility of their being classed as different tribes of the same stock.[2]

[1]The "toh" pronounced with a peculiar smacking of the tongue. To prevent typographical difficulties I shall avoid as much as possible the giving of aboriginal names in the course of this monograph. I am not acquainted with the system of Indian orthography suggested in a volume of the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, and even should I have it ready for reference I doubt whether it would prove adequate to the accurate rendering of the multifarious sounds of the Déné languages.

[2]This suffix varies with the different tribes Its equivalents on this (west) side of the Rocky Mountains are *tingkwotin* in Chilhχotin, *ten* and *kwoten* in Carrier, *t-chene* and *kwo-tchene* in Sékenais.

On the other hand, Dr. Dall's classification is incomplete, since it omits the Tsékenné, a tribe whose habitat is on both sides of the Rocky Mountains, whilst, of eight clearly distinct eastern tribes, he notes only two and that under aboriginal names, the genuineness of which is to me of more than doubtful character.

Some ethnographers, for reasons known to themselves, regard the T'simpsians, who lately migrated from this (North Pacific) coast to an Alaskan Island, as an offshoot of the Déné or Athabaskan stock. But even a slight knowledge of their language and physical characteristics ought to convince any one of the fact that they are altogether heterogeneous thereto.

This being admitted, it remains with me to state which tribes are to the subject of this paper, and conformably with the Canadian Institute's Sociological Circular to give some account of their social condition, customs, ceremonies, etc. The subject is rather comprehensive, and even without attempting to treat it exhaustively I fear I will have to give its exposition perhaps unexpected extension.

I.

Let me, however, premise that I shall content myself with speaking of the Western Dénés, excluding from my subject those tribes which have their fishing grounds on the north coast of British Columbia and which form by themselves a group apart. Our Dénés belong to a race of aborigines occupying a vast territory. Without mentioning the Navajoes who, advanced sentinels of a delayed army, wait in New Mexico for their kinsmen of the north to rejoin them under more favored climes, one can hardly travel from Fort Macpherson within the Arctic Circle to the plains of the South Saskatchewan without meeting with representatives of that great family. On our (west) side of the Rockies they are divided into four tribes speaking as many dialects. They are :

1st. The Chilhχotins[1] actually about 460 in number, occupying the valley of the river called after them, and the bunch-grass covered plateaus that skirt it on either side between 51° 10′ and 52° 40′ north latitude, and from the western banks of the Fraser to the Coast Range of mountains.

[1] "Inhabitants of Young Man's River."

2nd. The Carriers or Taχelh,[1] numbering 1,600 and whose territory borders on that of the Chilhχotins in the south, and extends as far up as 56° north latitude, leaving to a band of Sékanais part of the forest land intervening between said latitude and about 57° north where we find

3rd. The Nahanés,[2] who may number 700 and hunt over a territory, the northern limits of which (about 65°) are the southern frontiers of the Loucheux'[3] hunting grounds in the extreme North-west Territories. Lastly we have in our district a number of

4th. Tsekenné[4], more commonly called Sékanais who roam over the Rocky Mountains on either slope and the adjacent forests and plains from about 54° to 60°, north latitude. At present there are not more than 250 of them in British Columbia.

To these might be added the Beaver or Tsatens who trade at Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John's, Hudson's Bay Company's posts on Peace River, which, politically speaking, belong to our Province though east of the Rockies. But as (save a few individuals of that tribe) I have seen very little of the tribe, and to adhere to my resolution to speak only of what I have knowledge derived from personal intercourse, I shall refrain from alluding to them. Nevertheless, most of what shall be said of the Sékanais in the course of this monograph, may also be understood as largely applicable to that tribe.

All these tribes, especially the Chilhχotins and Carriers, were originally quite numerous. In fact, if we are to credit the old men among them, and even the Hudson's Bay Co.'s employées who were early in this country, it would be necessary to almost decuple the existing numbers in order to obtain an idea of the population as it stood at the time of the discovery of the country by Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1793. Repeated domestic and foreign wars and contagious diseases, which have several times in this century played havoc among them, have greatly reduced their numbers.

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[1]This word Taχelh is exotic to the Carriers' language, and, although very often used by them, they contend it was unknown among them before the advent of the traders. It is untranslatable.

[2]"People of the Setting Sun or West," as named by the Eastern Dénés. The Carriers and Sékanais call them Tseloné—"People of the end of the Rocks," because the band which is best known to them inhabits a plain north of a spur of the Rocky Mountains, which our Indians believe to be the extremity of the whole range.

[3]The so-called "Tukudh" or "Kut-chins."

[4]"Inhabitants of the Rocks."

Before proceeding further, would it be presumptuous on my part to suggest as a partial corollary of the foregoing the following classification of all the Déné or Téné[1] tribes based on personal observation and the knowledge of two of their dialects, and, in so far as the Eastern tribes are concerned, on the works of Rev. E. Petitot, a learned ethnographer and philologist, who has passed twenty (1862-1882) years of assiduous study among them?

CLASSIFICATION OF THE DÉNE TRIBES.

Their Name.	Their Habitat.	Supposed Population.
	Western Dénés.	
Chilhχotins (tœni)[1]	Chilcotin River	460
Carriers (tœné)	Stuart's Lake, North and South	1,600
Nah-anés (téné)	Stickeen River and East	700
	Intermediate Dénés.	
Sékanais toenè	Rocky Mountains	500
	Eastern Dénés.	
Chipewayans (déné)	Lake Athabasca, etc	3,000
Cariboo-eaters (déné)	East of Lake Athabasca	1,200
Beavers (dané)	Peace River	800
Yellowknives (déné)	North-east of Great Slave Lake	500
Dog-Ribs (duné)	Between Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes.	1,000
Slaves (déné)	West of Great Slave Lake & Mackenzie Riv.	1,000
Bad People (diné)	Old Fort Halkett	200
Hares (déné; adéné)	Mackenzie, Anderson & MacFarlane Rivers.	600
	Northern Dénés.	
Loucheux (dindjyé).	Mackenzie River, 67° northwards	400
" "	Alaska	4,000

[1]Œ in these and other Déné words corresponds to the French *e* of *je*, *me*, *te*, etc. *U* has the sound of the Italian *u* (oo).

The words within parentheses are the respective expressions used by the different tribes to say "Men," and thereby designate themselves when not referring to the country they inhabit. The remarkable homophony of these terms (which is easily explained by the fact that they are root words) is, however, somewhat misleading, inasmuch as it conveys an idea of philological similarity which is far from existing between the various dialects. Their lexical differ-

[1]D and t are interconvertible.

ences on the contrary are so wide that the Carriers and the Sèkanais, though geographically neighbours, can scarcely understand a word of each others' language unless they have previously learned it by personal intercourse.

Many of the remarks I am going to offer on the social status of the western tribes should be understood as applying to their original condition when no missionaries had as yet (20 years ago) endeavored to civilize and morally coërce them into giving up the most obnoxious of their customs. It would scarcely be to the point to speak of them as they are at present, since, being generally progressive in disposition, they are socially speaking pretty much as we have made them. However, the Sékanais and Nah'anés, owing to their nomadic mode of living and the consequent difficulty to produce permanent effects upon them, may be said to have to this day almost preserved their original social status.

II.

The American aboriginal type is too well known on this continent to require a description from me. Our Dénés, in spite of the characteristics which particularize them into various tribes, do not materially differ from it. Suffice it to say that whilst the Chilhχotins are generally of low stature, broad shouldered and not unlike the Chinese in their physical features; the Carriers are, as a rule, rather tall and stout without being corpulent, while most of them possess a fine physique. On the other hand, the Sékanais and Nah'anés, especially the former, are slender and bony, with hollow cheeks and almond shaped eyes shining with ophidian brightness.

Of course, tattooing prevailed everywhere. The face was particularly the object of would-be ornaments in the shape of incrusted crosses or birds on the cheeks, the forehead or the temples. But more commonly they consisted of parallel stripes, more or less numerous, on the chin or the cheeks converging to the mouth corners. On exceptional occasions, such as dances or "potlatches" the Dénés had recourse to charcoal to render themselves apparently more redoubtable. And the young folks had vermilion to enhance their natural beauty, and it may safely be conjectured that they did not use it sparingly.

Everybody knows that one of the characteristics of the aboriginal facies is the almost total absence of beard. Nevertheless, our Dénés evidently thought that nature had provided them with too much of that appendage of manhood so much prized by the Aryan races. So, to correct its work, they assiduously picked off the few hairs that would grow on their chin and upper lip with small copper pincers, which they constantly wore suspended from their neck. In the same way, they used to trim their eyebrows, giving them the tiniest possible shape.

As for extraneous ornaments of every day wear, they consisted mainly of *haliotis* ear-rings and nose pendants often of enormous size, hanging from the perforated septum. These were common to both sexes. The wives and daughters of influential persons wore, also, bracelets hammered out of copper bartered from the coast Indians. A sub-tribe of the Carriers did not consider these "jewels" sufficient. Among them, to attain the *plus ultra* of feminine beauty and be reputed something in society circles, women added to the tattooing, ear-rings, nasal pendants and bracelets, a blunt wooden peg or tabret passed through the lower lip, thereby preventing its contact with the teeth so as to give it the utmost possible prominence, somewhat after the fashion of the Papuans of New Guinea. This circumstance led to their being called "Babines," or "Lippy" in corrupted French, by the early French-Canadians in the North-West Company's employ, which name they have retained to this day.

In common with the Nazarenes of old, men and women parted their hair in the middle and wore it at full length (except when in mourning), the men letting it fall on their back tied together in a knot when in repose, and rolled up like that of the Chinese when travelling, while women had it resting on the forepart of their shoulders in two skilfully plaited tresses adorned with a species of small, elongated shell, (*Dentalium Indianorum*) which was highly prized among the natives, and which they obtained from the coast Indians[1]. On grand festival occasions, persons of rank and influence wore wigs made of plaited human hair in its natural length, inter-

[1]The Nestorian Bishop of Samarkand, writing to the Catholics of Bagdad, says of the Tartar Kéraites: "They do not wash their faces, nor cut their hair; but plait and tie it together at the top of their heads."—*Vide, Aboutfarage Chron: Syr. in Assemani.* Volume III, part 2, chapter ix, page 488.

laced with quantities of Dentalium or Hyaqua shells. Sometimes these ceremonial wigs were ornamented with stout bristles taken from the sea lion's whiskers, trimmed so as to look like horns worn on the forehead.

As for their wearing apparel, without being strictly uniform, it may be said that in no case was it of a very complicated pattern. Besides the 'pagne" or breech cloth which was seldom removed, they wore a sort of tunic or loose vestment of beaver, lynx or marmot skin, with the fur next to the body. The outside was painted in variegated designs in vermilion and adorned with numerous fringes to conceal the seams and bands of dentalium or dyed porcupine quills. A pair of leggings reaching to the thigh, together with mocass ns, which, in the case of the poor were of salmon skin, completed their costume. Unlike their kinsmen of the Great Mackenzie Basin, they had no hood attached to their coat or tunic; but instead, wore a head-dress made of a small ground-hog skin and fashioned somewhat like a Scotch bonnet.

The women's wearing apparel differed only from that ot the men by the length of their tunic, which was ordinarily covered with a skin cloak or a woven rabbit skin robe falling to their feet.

Washing may be said to be a European custom introduced among them. They clean their hands only, which they wash by filling their mouths with water and then squirting it over them in intermittent streams[1].

III.

Considered in their social condition and daily pursuits, a portion of the Western Dénés are nomadic and part may be described as semi-sedentary. To the first class belong the Sékanais and Eastern Nah'anés, the Chilhχotins, Carriers and Western Nah'anés forming the second. Thus, whilst their mode of living prevents the Sékanais from dwelling in houses and congregating together in villages, our Carriers pass the winter in lodges accommodating several families, and

[1] This reminds the comparative Sociologist of a similar custom prevailing among the Tartars or Moguls of the Middle Ages. William of Rubruck, (St. Louis' envoy to the great Khan, 1253) says that "They never wash their clothes. Cleanliness is in no more favor with "the men than with their ladies, and their mode of washing their faces and hands is by filling "their mouths with water and squirting it over them."—*Relation des Voyages en Tartarie*, *Bergeron*.

are also gathered in regular villages. And here I must remark that our tribes have scarcely any national economic policy; but have generally copied, wholly or in part, from the alien tribes with whom they have been in contact. Until a short time ago, the Chilhχotins, like the Shushwaps their eastern neighbours, used to pass the cold season in semi-subterranean huts rotund in form. An aperture in the centre of the mud covered roof to which an Indian ladder (a log chopped off every foot or so for steps) led, served the double purpose of a door and chimney. Imitating the Atnas or coast Indians with whom they had commercial relations, the Carriers lived in houses or lodges formed of slender poles, low in height and covered with spruce bark. These had an entrance at both gable ends, the fire place being in the centre to which corresponded an opening in the roof to let the smoke out. Salmon skins sewn together made a good substitute for boards and were used as doors[1]. Generally, they kept the spoils of their heraldic animals, fowl or rodent, nailed to the wall in the inside, whilst in the case of leading members of the tribe, they had their totem carved in wood and exhibited on the outside summit of the gable. (See figure 1.) The Sékanais were less pretentious. Even to this day, they content themselves with circular coniferous branch huts or lodges which they construct and abandon at a moment's notice, whenever their incessant peregrinations after food and peltries call therefor.

Unlike the Esquimaux[2] who sleep in a state of absolute nakedness, our Dénés roll themselves in their blankets, their feet to the fire, with almost all their clothes on. Making due allowance for their particular ideas of propriety, they are generally modest in deportment and chaste in privacy, despite the fact that several

[1] Compare these with the nomadic Moguls' "rolling habitations": "The houses they inhabit "are placed upon wheels and constructed of a kind of wooden latticed work with an opening "at the top that serves for a chimney. . . Before the entrance there is suspended a piece of felt."—*Rubrick's Narrative in Abbé Huc's Christianity in China, Tartary, etc*, Volume i, page 178.

[2] In a letter from the Rev. Mr. Morice, dated July 28th, 1889, occur the following words: "Concerning the passage in my paper which refers to the Esquimaux as sleeping naked, I have not in view the Labrador Esquimaux, who if I mistake not, have been semi-civilized by the Moravian brethern, but the Tchigh't or Esquimaux of the Anderson and Mackenzie Rivers, who are still in their primitive state. Now, I take the liberty to refer you, by permission, to Mr. McFarlane who passed part of his life as an H. B. Co's. officer among said aborigines, and who, but yesterday, assured me that both in winter and summer time, men, women and children of either sex, sleep stark naked."—*Ch. S. Cm.*

couples live together under the same roof and without partitions in the house.

Should I have to sketch rapidly our Dénés' moral features, I think I could, by ignoring some necessary exceptions, give them credit for relative morality, great honesty, intense fondness of their offspring and a general gentleness of disposition, not excluding, however, occasional freaks of irascibility. But to qualify these lines and give their true portrait, I should immediately add that they are prone to lying, addicted to gambling[1], naturally selfish, cowardly, and at times very lazy, especially the stronger sex.

Besides were I required to particularize in two words the ethic peculiarities of each tribe, I would state that the Chilhχotins are the most violent and manly of the whole group; the Carriers, the proudest and most accessible to progressive ideas; the Sékanais, the most superstitious and naive. As for the Nah'anés, though speaking a language different from, but allied to, that of the Sékanais, they are considered by our Carriers so closely similar to the latter in their physical and moral characteristics, as to receive in common with them the name of Lhtaten (Inhabitants of Beaver dams,) by allusion to their chief occupation, trapping and hunting.

IV.

With the view of having the family and tribal organization obtaining among the Western Dénés properly understood, I must refer at once to the clans or gentes into which, like the Iroquois and most of the American Aborigines, nearly all of them are divided. These to the number of five, form a kind of very strict relationship, to which, to the present time, they have held very tenaciously. Each of these clans has one or several particular heraldic emblems or totems, the toad, grouse, crow, beaver, salmon, etc.; the image of which formerly received special consideration. This organisation outsteps the village limits, and members of the same clan are to be found in localities very wide apart. But however remote their respective places, they still claim mutual kinship.

Now, from time immemorial, a fundamental law in their social constitution has been for individuals of the same clan never to inter-

[1]This of course, must be understood of those who are still out of the reach of missionary influence.

marry. So it is that endogamy is looked upon with horror among them. Indeed, I think I am warranted in affirming that marriage with a consanguine, unless a very close one, was preferred to matrimonial union with a co-clansman. As it is, agnation and consanguinity in the direct or collateral line on the paternal side were considered powerful barriers to sexual relations, males and females descended from the same stock being always regarded as brothers and sisters. But at what particular point the offspring of a common or collateral[1] branch would be deemed sufficiently distant to admit of matrimonial union is more than I can say, none among the natives themselves being able to satisfactorily solve that question. All I can say is that as long as the common ancestors of two individuals were remembered, the latter were easily dissuaded from contracting marriage together, even to the fourth and perhaps the fifth degree of consanguinity, especially if in the direct line. I do not mean to say that there never were tacitly allowed deviations from this law, nor absolutely any intermarriage in the same clan. But the repugnance which such unions inspired only goes to show that in this case, as in others, the exception confirms or proves the rule.

Such was not the case, however, with consanguinity in collateral lines by the mother's side, cousins of that class, even as near as the first degree, being by a time honored custom, almost bound to intermarry. And here it is as well to state at once that, in common with nearly all the primitive people, mother-right is the supreme law regulating succession among nearly all of the Western Dénés, and I may add that here[2] it admits of no exception whatever. On the other hand, another ordinance of their social code forbids titles as well as landed property to pass by heredity into a different clan. Therefore children of a notable among them belonging to their mother's clan, could never inherit from their father. But if the latter had nephews by a sister, one of them was *de jure* his successor, this nephew belonging through his mother to his uncle's clan. Now, by way of compensation, and to permit the notable's children who could not otherwise inherit from him, to enjoy at least, as much as was lawful of their father's succession, one of his daughters would be united in marriage with her inheriting maternal first cousin.

[1] On the father's side.

[2] At Stuart's Lake.—*Ch. S. Cm.*

As for affinity consequent upon either lawful or unlawful sexual relations, it was simply ignored. Nay, I should say that it was rather considered a powerful incentive to marriage, except when the regulations of the clan organization interfered so as to make the two relatives fellow clansmen. Thus it was, that in the case of a deceased brother's wife, the Dénés treated her conformably with the directions of the Jewish law, and the nephew considered himself in duty bound to espouse her.

It would be difficult to give here a complete table of agnates and cognates as named and ranked by the four Tribes under review, some of whom receive different names according as they are called by a male or female, or relatively to their comparative age. I shall, however, confine myself to a few remarks embodying the more characteristic peculiarities in their mode of reckoning kindred relationship.

1° A large proportion of our Dénés never go beyond the second degree in computing their progenitors or offspring, whether in a direct or collateral line, and in no instance do they go beyond the third degree—more distant relatives in either line being then called respectively grand-father and grand-mother if ascendants, or grand-children if descendants.

2° Grand-uncles and grand-aunts both maternal and paternal are also called grand-father and grand-mother.

3° Although they possess and sometimes use words meaning brother or sister without any reference to their relative age, they more generally designate them elder brother and elder sister, or younger brother and younger sister.

4° A son is called *syé* by his father and *syaz* by his mother who also calls her daughter *syatsé*, while her father when referring to her[1] always uses *stsé*.

5° Both nephews and nieces are called *stsû* by their maternal uncle and *skwaz* by their maternal aunt, while either paternal uncle or aunt will call their nephew younger brother and their niece younger sister.

[1] These and the following Aboriginal terms are in the Carrier dialect. This not being a philological paper, I have deemed it superfluous to have them accompanied with their Chilhχotin and Sékanais etc., equivalents.

6° *Sthi·* stands for paternal uncle and *spizyan* for paternal aunt; *sœz'é* meaning my maternal uncle and *sake*, my maternal aunt.

7° Maternal cousins of both sexes are *szit* to their co-relative male cousin and *sunté* if male or *szit* if female to their co-relative female cousin, whilst paternal cousins are always called brother or sister in the indefinite mood.

8° *Schi·* does duty for grand-children of any sex and also for the other offspring alluded to in the first remark. In the same way, brother-in-law and sister-in-law receive the common appellation of *sre*.

The clan organisation obtains also among the Western Nah'anés, who have frequent intercourse with the Coast Indians from whom it is derived; but it is unknown among the Sékanais and Eastern Nah'anés, who owing to the geographical position of their territory, have adhered to their primitive usages and kept aloof from foreign practices. As a consequence father-right is the only law which regulates succession among them.

V.

Marriage in the Christian sense of the term, is rather a misnomer when intended to designate native unions such as were contracted before the advent of the Missionaries in the Country. Co-habitation would better answer the purpose. In fact, it is the corresponding expression they employ themselves when referring to a man married to such and such a woman. They say *yerœsta*, "he stays with her." For as there was no valid contract and no intention on either side to consider their union as a permanent connection, divorce resulted as a matter of course whenever one of the partners was tired of the other. In that case, the ci-devant husband would take back anything he had bestowed upon his so-called wife, and both of them would try life with a new partner. Naturally the man, especially if in easy circumstances, would have a better chance of success than his former wife. Supposing children had been born to them, divorce was more difficult, but by no means impossible. In that event, the father would ordinarily take possession of the offspring. For among the Indians, as among many of their civilized brethren "might is right," and as they are exceedingly fond of their children, the late husband

would rather see them temporarily in a stranger's hands than entrust them to their own mother's custody.

Except among the Carriers, early marriages are in favor among the Dénés, oftentimes the female being barely pubescent when mated. Among the Sékanais nothing was simpler or more expeditious than the contraction of marriage. Whenever a young hunter had made up his mind on mating a fair child of the forest, with scarcely any previous courting, he would in the day time simply ask the girl of his choice: "*Will you pack my beaver snares for me?*" To which, if she refused him, she would make answer: "No, there are plenty of women, ask another one." But if agreeable to the maid, she would at once answer without any conventional blushes: "Perhaps, ask my mother." Upon which the lad would not ask her mother, but the girl would immediately tell her about it. Then, following her parent's advice, she would hasten to erect a branch lodge alongside their own primitive habitation,[1] and in the evening, the affianced youth (such was he after the proposee's answer) would on entering it hand her his "beaver snares." Without further ceremony, they were man and wife. Supposing the woman proposed to was the former wife of the man's deceased brother, there was no declining his offer, she was bound to accept his "beaver snares."

The preliminaries, if not more complicated, were at least more difficult and tedious among the Carriers. According to their etiquette, the intended wife had absolutely nothing to say for or against the projected union. Whenever a youth of a different clan had singled her out to be his future wife, he would not exchange a word with her, even when proposing, but installing himself at her father's home, he would begin to work for him, not failing to present him or the girl's most influential relative with anything of value which might come into his possession, either by hunting or otherwise. Meantime he would never tell them the reason of such unwonted liberality, neither would they ask him, but they easily guessed it. When after one or two years wooing to . . . . . his intended wife's parents, he thought a well deserved "Yes" was likely to reward his efforts; he would demand her from her father or guardian through the instrumentality of an obliging friend. If agreeable, the suitor was thereby

[1] A Sékanais will never dwell under the same roof as his married children!

married. If not, then the recipient of his favors was bound to return an equivalent in kind.

Naturally enough, after having won his wife at such a cost, the young husband was not ready to reject her without sufficient provocation, and it may easily be conjectured that the prospect of having to recommence anew a protracted courtship, must have tended not a little to render the matrimonial tie, if not sacred, at least more durable among the Carriers than it was among the Sékanais. However, it must be said that in case the wooing party was well connected, the procedure previous to acceptance was somewhat curtailed, and frequently almost entirely dispensed with.

Polygamy flourished to a great extent among all of the tribes. The more exalted the man's rank, the more numerous would be his wives. The father of the present chief of this place (Fort St. James, Stuart's Lake) had as many as six wives at one time. Nevertheless, there was always one, not necessarily the first in priority of co-habitation, who was regarded as superior to the others whom she then called her younger sisters, receiving in return the title of elder sister from them. Even polyandry was in honour conjointly with polygamy among the Sékanais; but remained unknown to the Carriers.

A peculiarity perhaps worthy of notice is that an Indian woman will never say "my husband" when referring to her mate; but will invariably say "he" or "this child's father." Even men are quite as prudish and will seldom be caught saying "my wife" in speaking of their partner. Likewise both men and women feel a great reluctance to tell their names and will generally rather use a round about description than the appropriate vocative.

VI.

I need hardly say that among the Dénés the status of woman after marriage was seldom preferable to her previous condition. For I take it to be granted that among most of the non-Christian peoples of the day, as well as the various nations of antiquity, woman, under one form or another, is, and has ever been, very little short of her lord and master's slave. While still a girl, she had of course, to render her mother such menial assistance as lay in her power; but then she

was generally taken good care of, well fed and well clothed, so as to command a higher price in the bachelor's market. Now that her fate is sealed, she must be the real factotum of the household.

And well might she consider herself enjoying a holiday life, even though very busy, when at her new home; but it is chiefly when travelling that life must become rather burdensome to her. Then her lot is to pack all the family impedimenta, while her husband, gun in hand, gaily precedes her on the way trying to have an occasional shot at game to diversify the menu of the evening meal. However, let us not pity her beyond measure, for as she never knew or even dreamt of a better fate she does not murmur herself, neither does she ever complain of her husband's ungallant conduct. Besides, her ability for this kind of labor has been developed from childhood, since among the natives even the little ones are trained to carry some of the family goods and chattels.

Her capacity for carrying heavy burdens lies in her ability to preserve an accurate balancing of the load rather than in any great muscular strength. The pack rests on the back, between the shoulders, supported by a leather line which passes in a broad band across the forehead and is secured by the ends of the line being tied across the chest.

It would however, be wrong to conclude that her daily toil is over when at dusk the couple stop for the purpose of camping. Then all the work in the way of gathering firewood, erecting the temporary lodge, cooking, etc., must be attended to by her, the man's duties and attributes among the Dénés, when in their primitive state, being restricted to hunting, eating and sleeping

One must not however, infer from this that her lot was such that she had absolutely no influence either in the family or the village circles. Oftentimes the woman did exercise much influence, but then it was not owing to her position as wife or mother, but generally on account of her birth and her father's rank. Her marriage conferred no right or privileges upon her, nor did it give her any claim to her husband's personal or landed property. Man and wife were never regarded as a moral unit, as customary among us; but just in the

same way as during their union, they continued to have their respective names, even so did the property of each ever remain distinctly personal.

This, among the Dénés, is twofold: private and personal, as clothes, canoes, dogs, etc., and real or permanent as are the hereditary estates. For to the rank of Tœnezoi or notable are attached hunting grounds, the limits of which are very clearly defined. These are, by right, held in proprietorship by the titular only; but by a sort of tacit concession, other heads of families of the same clan as the legitimate proprietor share the usufruct thereof during his good pleasure. In fact, they may be said to be, though of inferior rank, his co-associates, hunting with and for him and receiving of the spoils only what he is pleased to let them retain. As already stated, a woman by the fact of her marriage, obtains no claim whatever to these lands, since they could not be alienated or made over to a different clan, but, upon their owner's death, they pass regularly into his nephew's possession, failing whom, then to one of the previous titular's brothers, or, if there is none living, to his sister or any fellow clansman before designated by him.

As for the private property of the deceased notable, until quite recently his widow could not inherit even the least fraction thereof, nor could she hold her own personal chattels, dress or working implements; they would be ruthlessly snatched away from her, nolens volens, by her late husband's relatives, who would also claim and divide among themselves all of the deceased's goods, even though his orphaned children might thereby suffer. To be exact, however, I must add that in case the deceased was the wife, her former husband, unless he were a notable, would hardly be better treated. Even in these exceptional cases, the survivor would be expected, if only for decency's sake, to make presents to his former wife's relatives.

Adoption is practised among the Dénés; but without any ceremonial formalities, and does not involve the right to succession and heredity thereby usual among most civilized people. Supposing the dead notable to have left no brother or nephew, any other acceptable member of his clan, even his sister would succeed him rather than his adopted son, and then owing to the latter being regarded as belong-

ing to his adopting mother's clan. In this case however, he could claim the right to joint use of the hunting grounds together with the heir who had inherited their real proprietorship.

Landed property is unknown among the Sékanais and Eastern Nah'anes who are governed by father-right. Among them the eldest son, or failing him, a surviving brother succeeds the deceased father of a family as leader of the band while engaged in hunting. On the other hand, although groups of related families ordinarily hunt in the same mountains, streams or lakes as their ancestors, they do not regard them as their exclusive property and will never contest the right of others to hunt or trap thereon.

VII.

As previously stated our Dénés and, as a rule, all races of Aborigines I may say, are very fond of their little ones and, as a consequence, Infanticide has been exceedingly rare among them. Nevertheless, a native custom now happily discontinued, required an exception in cases of twins, one of whom had to be disposed of, as two children at one birth were thought portentous of ill and not much less than a natural monstrosity.

When the period of confinement arrived, the mother would be delivered of her child without the help of a midwife, in any place and under any circumstances—in her lodge or even while travelling, and apparently without any pain. This was the almost invariable experience in former times; but truth obliges me to add that among the Carriers, the most civilized of the four tribes, women have not gained much by the change in their diet and mode of living, inasmuch as painful accouchements and even death, at childbirth, are becoming unhappily of too frequent occurence; still-born children are also more numerous than formerly.

Circumcision is unknown among the Western Dénés, and I have never heard of any practice in favour among any tribe which could be construed as a remnant thereof.

Formerly children were named a short time after their birth by their parents or any person who was believed to have received, while

dreaming, supernatural communication as to the name they should be known by. This was usually, except in the case of girls, indicative of some peculiarity, the recalling of which was supposed to bring good luck in hunting. When the child's parents were of rank or influence, he was, at the occasion of one of their ceremonial banquets, held up in the midst of the crowd by his or her maternal grandmother and given a name previously borne by a maternal ancestor.

It is a well known fact, that among the Aborigines of both North and South America, mothers never carry their infants in their arms, but uniformly pack them on their back. Our Dénés are no exception to this rule. The Chilhχotin mothers manufacture as receptacles for their babes, pretty little osier baskets or cradles generally placed in closely fitting deer hide coverings, wherein the infant is tightly laced, much as a little mummy. A birch bark conduit leading to an orifice in the narrow end of the cradle prevents its contents from remaining in an unhealthy condition. In this respect they are decidedly ahead of the Carriers who only use swaddling clothes firmly secured around the infant.

Parental authority, either maternal or paternal, may be correctly qualified as nil or thereabouts, except among the Carriers and Chilhχotins, when it is a question of marriage. The parents are under any circumstances very averse to inflicting punishments on their offspring when young, and cannot well expect to be able to control them when they become full grown.

"Fecund-like an Irishwoman," the female Dené would soon g[illegible] in a numerous family were she only to take proper hygienic precautions and wean her child after a reasonable period of suckling. But, even at the present time, unless physically unable to do so, she will nurse it as long as three and four years, sometimes longer! However, were it not for periodical visitations of contagious diseases formerly unknown, the native population would soon increase in a fair ratio, as will be seen by the following table of the births and deaths of this place for the last years. The population was exactly 140 by the last (31st December 1888) census.

TABLE OF THE BIRTHS AND DEATHS AT NAKAZTLI (STUART LAKE).[1]

YEAR.	DEATHS.	BIRTHS.	EXCESS OF DEATHS.	EXCESS OF BIRTHS.
1885.	3	8	0	5
1886.	3	4	0	1
1887.	1	4	0	3
1888.	5	6	0	1
TOTAL.	12	22	0	10

Even more satisfactory data could be recorded of other Carrier villages whose population are in conditions more favorable to natural increase. But I regret to be unable to furnish the reader with vital statistics of the four tribes or any whole tribe. However, I think the above a fair specimen of the average variations in the native population as far as the Carriers are concerned. As for the Chilhχotins, it must be admitted that they do not keep abreast of the Carriers in natural increase, whilst it is certain that the Sékanais who used to hunt on this side of the Rocky Mountains have, for the last few years, been declining in numbers at a rather disquieting rate.

VIII.

The staple food of the Western Dénés before the introduction of civilization and its concomitants, may be described under three heads: Fish, Meat and Berries, to which correspond the co-relative pursuits of Fishing, Hunting and Collecting.

Salmon is to the Carrier and Chilhχotin what seal is to the Esquimaux, rice to the Chinaman and wheat to the white man. Give them a large run of salmon, and abundance with its logical associates, rejoicing, feasting and dancing reign in the camp; cut off the supply, and there will be famine and desolation, silence in the village and melancholy in all hearts.

Only two species of salmon are believed to come up as far as Stuart's Lake through the Fraser and its affluents; they are the red

[1] Children who died in the year of their birth are not counted in the above table. It is also but proper to note that, though last year an aggravated form of measles attacked all the children of this village below, and some above, the age of 15, yet, thanks chiefly to the adoption and enforcement of stringent and prudential measures, only two of them who were at the time away with their parents in the woods succumbed to the disease.

fleshed salmon (*Salmo Quinnat*) or suck eye and the large white fleshed salmon (*Salmo proteus* . . .) called *Kes* by the natives. The first species is to them the fish par excellence, and so they call it *thallo*, the water-fish. To catch it, the river is staked across in its whole width, as is practised by the Kamtschadals, and the fish are driven into hurdle corrals terminating in long bottle-shaped baskets from which escape is impossible. To preserve them they also follow the Kamtschadals' method. After having cut the fish open and extracted the spine and vertebræ with the flesh adherent thereto, they dry it beneath a rough pine covered shed, by the action of the sun and air largely aided by the fire and smoke underneath.

In some places where the stream contracts to an insignificant width and in escaping from its rocky embankment produces a fall deep enough to temporarily impede the salmon's course upwards, the Carriers simply bridge the fall over and with bark ropes, suspend therefrom a sort of lattice, seven or eight feet wide, the lower extremity of which is curved up like a pot-hanger. When the fish attempts to jump over the fall, he strikes the lattice barrier and drops back into the basket-like bottom.

To get the *Kes* or white fleshed salmon which is not so gregarious, the Carriers use a bone harpoon of a somewhat unique pattern of which figure I will give a correct idea. Standing on rocks or light scaffolding projecting in the river—they spy the fish as it winds its way up stream and spear it with said harpoon fastened for the purpose to a shaft 12 or 15 feet long. In shallow streams, they cautiously wade in the water and dexterously launch their weapon at the fish, thereby securing for it increased velocity and additional length of reach. Instead of the harpoon the Chilhχotins employ a double dart made of mountain sheep's horn (figure 3.) which, when it fastens in the flesh of the salmon, detaches itself from the forked shaft to which it is securely tied by a plaited raw-hide line.

They also obtain small fish, such as trout, white fish, carp, késœl (a small species of salmonidæ), etc., by means of nets which, when thoroughly of aboriginal manufacture, are made of the spun fibre of nettle, red willow bark or of a semilignous plant they call hwonœth'a, the *Epilobium angusti florium* of Botanists.

When engaged in the salmon fishing they ordinarily congregate at the most suitable place near their respective villages in order to make and repair in common the barriere or wood pole staking across the stream while the "*kuntzi*" or cylindrical baskets are individually set by heads of families in the place assigned them by traditional right. In the same way when trout fishing is conducted on a large scale, as is usual when in the fall of the year, they gather their winter supply, each family or aggregate of homogeneous families, has its own particular shot in the rivers or in the vicinity of islands in the lakes from which they are not at liberty to wander in search of a better position.

Fishing in the winter is a rather uncomfortable occupation. Having previously cut a hole in the ice of about one foot in diameter[1] our Déné stretches himself thereover on the frozen surface. He then holds up with the left hand a small stick to which is suspended bone imitations of fry (figure 4.) which he gently oscillates in the water, so as to give them a life like appearance. He will patiently wait well wrapped up in his blanket for the larger fish to bite, even though it may be 30° or more below zero of Fahrenheit. If fortune favours him, he speedily spears his fish with the bone harpoon already spoken of, which in this case is only four times larger than that of figure 2, and fixed in a short handle.

A more interesting mode of fishing is when, during the cool spring nights, the Carriers lazily glide over their country lakes carrying in their canoes flaming pine torches which have the effect of attracting fish of every description, and by dazzling and, as it were, charming them, render them an easy prey to the harpoon.

The Sékanais disdain fish of any kind and regard fishing as a degrading occupation unworthy of a hunter. They live almost entirely on moose, cariboo, bear, marmot or beaver meat with lynx and rabbits in their season.

IX.

Before the North West Company's advent in the country, there was very little fur-hunting done save what was indispensable to the family's subsistence and clothing, and even then among the two

[1] Formerly this was done by means of heated stones.

most southern tribes, it was done only in summer time. For, strange as it may appear, before Sir Alexander MacKenzie's discovery of New Caledonia in 1793, snow shoes were unknown except among the Sékanais and Nah'anés. Locomotion among the Western Dénés is ordinarily by walking in very narrow paths though the Chilhχotins and Southern Carriers now travel not unfrequently on horseback. More commonly however, the Carriers utilize as public high-ways the numerous lakes which dot their country, whether it be summer or winter time. They use "dug-out" canoes made of the hollowed out trunk of a large cotton-wood tree (*Abies subalpina*). There is no artistic merit in their design, which is of a rather rough description, for we must not forget that "dug-outs" are among them a recent importation from the East.[1] In the beginning of this century they used only birch bark canoes.

Another mode of travelling, proper to the cold season, is by means of light toboggans or sleds drawn by three or four dogs trotting along in Indian file. These animals (which are now of different breeds) are very serviceable to the natives; for, even during the summer, when families are en route for their hunting grounds, their canine companions are compelled to assist the women in packing part of their master's baggage, firmly secured with lines to their sides.

The chief object of our Dénés' pursuit when hunting is beaver. Since they have learned the commercial value of fur, they have waged such a constant war on this valuable animal that he is practically and rapidly verging towards ultimate extinction. It is during the winter months, as well as after the opening of the spring, that beaver hunting is practised on the most extensive scale. Once they have found his lodge, an indispensable preliminary to secure his capture is to discover the exact location of his path or trail under ice. It appears that he follows well marked routes when swimming from, or returning to, his winter quarters. These our Dénés easily find out by sounding the ice in different directions with cariboo horns. Their well exercised ears readily discover by a peculiar resonance of the ice where the rodent's usual path lies. So, at a given point, they cut a

1 Some sixty or seventy years ago, a party of Iroquois having crossed the Rocky Mountains reached Lake Tatlh'a in two wooden canoes which at once excited the curiosity and covetousness of a band of Carriers who killed the strangers for the sake of their canoes. These having been brought here (Stuart's Lake) served as models for the building of the first home made "dug-outs.

hole wherein they set their babiche beaver net, taking care to attach thereto a switch—the chief end of which, issuing from the water, is provided with several small bells.[1] Then the hunter (should I not say the fisher?) proceeds to demolish the beaver's lodge, in order to drive him off. Should the game not be found there, the same operation is repeated at his adjoining provision store. When the undulations of the water tell of his presence therein, he is frightened away to where the net is set. Supposing that the beaver is swifter than his hunter and reaches the net before the latter, the efforts he will make to extricate himself therefrom will agitate the small bells before mentioned, and the hunter will immediately make for the hole and draw him out before he has time to cut himself clear of the net.

In the spring—besides occasional shooting—spearing and trapping are the two modes adopted in catching the beaver. To spear him, they employ a bone barbed harpoon, such as that delineated in figure 5 which, being securely fastened to a long shaft, is launched at the game from a distance to ensure greater speed and impetus to the weapon.

When trapping they resort to no remarkable device save that, with the object of attracting the beaver, they dilute the mud contiguous to the steel trap in one of the beaver's favorite haunts, with pulverized castorum which they keep in decanter-like birch bark bottles, figure 6.

More nomadic game such as lynx, martens, fishers, etc., are captured by means of snares in their most beaten paths.[2] The larger game—bears, moose and cariboo, etc., are usually chased with dogs, often for a full day at a time before they are brought to bay and shot. Bears are also frequently taken in snares.

The Sékanais, owing to the peculiar topography of their country, hunt cariboo on a larger scale, and with more satisfactory results. They previously set in a continuous line 40 or 50 moose hide snares in suitable defiles or passes in the mountains frequented by the animals. Two of the most active hunters are then deputed to watch at either end of the line, after which the hunters, who usually number

1 These have replaced the beaver nails and pebbles of former times.

2 The larger proportion, however, of fishers and martens are taken by means of wooden fall traps.

fifteen or more, drive the band of deer or cariboo to where the snares are set and, by loud shouting and firing of guns, they scare and thereby force the reluctant game to pass through the noose which at once contracts around their necks. The deer immediately scamper away with the moveable sticks, to which the snares are attached, and which, being soon caught among fallen or standing trees or other obstacles, cause the caught animal to stop suddenly with the result of being strangled to death in a short time.

Besides the aforesaid game, which is indigenous to the country occupied by the four tribes in question, every recurring spring and fall bring the Carriers large numbers of geese and many varieties of ducks to diversify their daily diet. For a couple of weeks or more, there is shooting in almost every point of the compass and generally not without effect. As for grebes which every spring gather in very large numbers at the outlet of the lakes and more particularly of this (Stuart's) lake, a more economic plan is acted on to effect their capture. Taking advantage of the fact that these water fowl are very gregarious and will seldom migrate northwards before the lake is free from ice, the natives set common fish nets on the surface of the water and, manning eight to ten canoes at a time, they surround and drive them into the nets. This is a very exciting exercise and at the same time prolific of good results, as a catch of a hundred head at a single drawing of the net is not deemed very marvellous.

The grebes having been stripped of their feathers, their fat is extracted when raw and converted into cakes of more or less consistency, part of which is called in requisition from time to time to do duty as "*piment*" to season their preserved berries.

X.

The Dénés find a valuable resource in the various species of berries which yearly ripen in profusion in almost every part of their immense forests. Conspicuous among them, either by its abundance or its property of long keeping, and its consequent value as an addition to the native stores of winter supplies, is the service-berry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*). Indeed the Carriers often designate it by the simple appellation of *mi*, that is the fruit. Every fall, the women gather large quantities of them in birch bark baskets. These berries are preserved

either sun-dried or compressed into thin cakes somewhat resembling large flat plugs of tobacco. This is done by a process which, if primitive, is not the less complicated. When the fruit has been collected in sufficient quantities, they build on the ground a sort of large boiling vessel with spruce bark supported by sticks driven into the soil. This being filled with service-berries, they throw in heated stones which in a few moments, will have the double effect of boiling and pressing down the fruit whose juice escapes through a narrow conduit at the bottom side of the boiler into an adjoining flat vessel also made of the same material. When the liquid is thus all extracted, the residue of the larger vessel is thoroughly kneaded; after which it is spread out in thin layers on willow hurdles previously covered with *epilobium* leaves and then exposed to the action of the sun and air. By frequently sprinkling the residue with the juice of the berry it coagulates into large cakes of almost uniform thickness. These when thoroughly prepared will keep for years, and when sprinkled over with a little sugar, it is of tempting succulency even to others than Indians.

They also treat in about the same way the *yenthœmi* (*Vaccinium uliginosum*, bog bill-berry), a species of small blue-berry, very sweet and juicy when fresh; but these they boil in common kettles and spread the jam on small hurdles without having previously extracted the juice. Several other species of berries which it is not necessary to enumerate are also preserved in a similar manner.

Another welcome addition to the Dénés' larder is the *Kœnnih* or *cambium* layer of the scrub pine (*P. contorta*). This they get at by barking the tree with a cariboo horn or shoot thereof (figure 7.) and then scraping off the cambium in thin ribbon like shavings which, after undergoing the usual drying process, will retain for quite a time much of its original freshness, although indubitably savouring of gum, or perhaps owing to that flavour, it is considered very wholesome. They also eat the growing shoots of the willow herb, (*Epilobium heracleum*) and other plants indigenous to their country.

Besides the above mentioned berries and economic plants, many roots containing more or less starch, were formerly, and are still to a great extent, sought after, dried and stowed away. The Chilhχotins

and Southern Carriers have two species of potato-like tubers, identical in nature and taste, though differing in shape and name. One (*esrouh* in Chilhχotin) is elongated and closely resembles a diminutive "lady-finger" potato. The other is spheroidal and called *suntî* by the Chilhχotins. Both kinds are dug out by the women with T shaped sticks and dried in large quantities. These edible roots are not found in the Sékanais' nor in the greater part of the Carriers' territory. But the latter possess a substitute in the root of a species of fern not so plentiful, but of a larger size. They call it *'ah*. It is not dried but eaten fresh and baked *à l'étouffée* in this wise: The natives dig out a hole about three feet in diameter in the ground, pave its bottom with heated stones over which they strew chips of alder bark, and then fill it up with the roots. The whole is then covered with earth and the roots will be ready for the table (or rather the mat) ten or twelve hours later, that is, when entirely cooled down. They claim that this root when thus prepared is really most excellent and it is greatly relished. They also eat the esculent bulb of a kind of reddish lily (*Tsachœn*[1]).

It is almost needless to mention the fact that none of the Déné tribes originally cultivated the soil. Of late years, however, the Chilhχotins and Carriers have made laudable efforts to raise potatoes and a few vegetable roots wherever practicable. The former, whose land and climate are more adaptable to agriculture, now reap tolerably good wheat crops. They also possess large bands of cayouse horses which graze annually on the famous bunch grass of their extensive table-lands. As for the Nah'anés and Sékanais as a rule, they know horses only by name (*Chicho*, big dog) and have never yet grown a single potato.

XI.

A paper, however imperfect, on the Sociology of Indian tribes would hardly be complete without at least a reference to their arts and industries. As these were not of a multifarious nature among our Dénés, I shall be rather short on that head. Besides, I have already, in several instances, touched upon some of their industries,

1 This is the *Erythronium Esculentum* which, according to Lapérouse and other travellers, the Kamtschadals and the Yenissei Tartars so greatly relish.

and here I take the liberty to refer the reader to what I have said of their costumes, their habitations, the implements they use in hunting and fishing, and their divers methods of preserving berries and edible roots.

The Carriers who, since the advent of the whites, have proved to be the most amenable to civilization, of the four tribes treated of may be said to have been formerly the least industrious. Among them we find no trace of basket work of any kind, and they formerly imported from the coast some of the most useful of their working implements such as axes and adzes. Owing to the absence of mountain goat in their country, they also depended upon the Sékanais and the Atnas for their supply of spoons and other household utensils which, among the Aborigines, are usually manufactured from the horns of that animal.

Birch bark was substituted among them for willow basket work. They employed it in making vessels or dishes of any size and shape; the fibrous roots of spruce split in four parts was used in lieu of thread. One kind of these vessels, remarkable by the absence of any seam (the bark being simply folded up on its four corners and so retained by a split encircling switch) did service as a kettle or boiler. Therein they boiled meat or roots as they now do in tin and copper kettles, but with the difference that they had to keep it away from the flames. They are still loud in their praise of its usefulness as a rapid boiler. On grand occasions, they were replaced by large spruce bark vessels built on the ground or square wooden boxes imported from among the Atnas wherein, when filled with water and meat, heated stones were repeatedly thrown until the meat was boiled.

Instead of bark vessels, the Chilhχotins use spruce root for making neat and sometimes elaborately ornamented baskets and other vessels which are impermeable to water. Indeed one kind, which may contain eight or nine gallons, serves to keep water for household purposes. I regret to be unable to minutely describe their method of weaving the spruce splints, not having any of these baskets in my collection of Indian curiosities, and having neglected to watch their mode of working when stationed among them in years past. I had ample opportunities to do so. However, I am strongly inclined to believe

that they are coiled or woven according to the method described and illustrated by Professor O. Mason in the Smithsonian Report for 1884,[1] but with this difference that all those I have seen among the Chilhχotins are broad-mouthed and wallet-like instead of having the shape of a jar characteristic of the specimen illustrated by the learned Professor.

Another industry more diffused among the Western Dénés is the weaving or knitting of rabbit skins into robes or blankets. They begin the process by cutting each skin with the hair on in one single narrow strip which they knit or rather twist and weave on wooden frames of the required size.

Their mocassins, gloves and mittens are of cariboo or deer skin dressed in this wise: After having subjected the skin when fresh to a slight drying process, they scrape off any particle of flesh or fat adherent thereto with a bear bone chisel-like tool such as that illustrated by figure 8. Then, the hair is removed with a scraper formed of the tibia of a cariboo (figure 9.) after which it is thoroughly rubbed with the brain of the anim. and put aside until needed for immediate use. In that event, after having passed a night soaked in cold water, it is subjected to several rinsings in warm water alternating with repeated scrapings until, being quite dry, soft and pliable, it is given the form of a bag and placed over a fire or rather the smoke of vegetable detritus started in a hole in the ground. When it has been thus thoroughly smoked on both sides, it is ready for use.

The same process is followed when tanning or dressing moose skins except that owing to the peculiar tenacity of the hair, a short curved knife is used instead of the bone scraper. Out of these skins they make the bear and cariboo snares mentioned in a previous paragraph. These snares consist simply of babiche-like ropes twisted together into a line which is outwardly protected from moisture by the inner bark of the red willow wrapped around it. The Chilhχotins plait, instead of twisting these lines and thus obtain very neat and strong ropes.

As if conscious of their inferiority as workmen, the Western Dénés made but few attempts at carving. Yet, in some of their

1 Annual Report, etc. Part ii., p. 294. Plate v.

ceremonies they used wooden masks and castanets or rattles which were not devoid of merit as works of art. I have none of these in my possession, and will simply refer the Sociologist to the specimens drawn in Plates vi. and ix. illustrating Mr. G. M. Dawson's monograph of the Kaidah Indians.[1] The masks of our Dénés, minus the ears, were identical in shape with those of the aforesaid Plates, whilst their rattles were only somewhat plainer in design than those used by the Kaidahs.

The Déné knives were ordinarily made of the common arrow-head flint, but those made of beaver teeth were more esteemed.

As already hinted, axes were not home-made, at least among the Carriers, and the few cutting tools then in use among them were in the possession of the notables alone. The *commune vulgus* had recourse to fire in order to cut their firewood and the few slender poles or logs required for the erection of their lodges. With the exception of the Chilhχotins, they did not even know of the elongated stone hammer, formerly so common among other American aborigines.

As for copper they obtained it by barter with Indians from the coast; but its use among them was restricted to the manufacture of trinkets, bracelets and hair-pincers. *Apropos* of copper, the Carriers of some localities have the following legend respecting its discovery and introduction among them. They contend that in times not very remote, all the Indians (themselves among the rest) congregated at a certain point of the sea coast around a tower-like copper mountain, emerging from the midst of the water. Their object was to decide which tribe should become the possessor thereof. When all had united in shouting, the mountain, after a time, began gradually to totter and the Kaidahs who are blessed with big heads and strong voices, caused it to fall on their side. "Thus it was," they add, "that those Indians won or secured the copper mountain, and we have ever since been obliged to have recourse to them for what we require of that metal to make bracelets for our wives and daughters."

1 Geological Survey of Canada, Reports for 1878-79. Appendix A.

XII.

The only pursuit for which our Déné may be said to have been amply provided with home-made implements was war and its allied occupation, hunting. The offensive weapons in use among them were arrows, spears, lances and *casse-têtes.*

Their arrows were of two kinds: bone and flint. The first were made of the front teeth of the beaver reduced by scraping to the required shape. They were reputed the most effective. Figure 10 represents flint arrow heads of different sizes, forms and material. They are produced here for the sake of comparison with those used by the mound-builders of Illinois and other States of the American Union with which they will be found identical in shape and material, though a distance of at least two thousand miles separates the aborigines who made them. These arrow points are all drawn to the natural size and they are therefore somewhat smaller than those of the mound-builders. The two marked A and B may be described as the typical arrow-heads of the Western Dénés and are of the blackish resonant flint generally used in the fabrication of aboriginal weapons. C and D are composed of a semi-translucent bluish variety of siliceous stone not so common and consequently more prized than the ordinary arrow flint. E represents the most beautiful of all the Déné arrow-heads in my possession. It has been ingeniously chipped from a hard crystalline species of flint, and its form and finish display evidences of, I should say, exceptionally good workmanship. Some are also formed of a whitish siliceous pebble; but the points made therewith are, as a rule, of a rather rough description.

The Dénés likewise used another sort of offensive weapon which they called *Lhthiladinla,* that is, "fixed at the end of the bow." Its name explains its nature. It was of common flint chipped to the shape of figure 11 and sometimes of figure 12. They brought it into requisition when too closely pressed by the enemy to shoot, and used it as a spear. Besides, they possessed also the regular spear or lance of which figure 12 is a reduced representation.

All these weapons were obtained by chipping the flint with a moose molar tooth without any previous blocking. As a rule, these abori-

gines used only loose pieces of the flint, which were collected for or by the notables, and then handed to the village arrow-smith for reduction to the required size and shape, and, as a finishing process, the edges were generally sharpened by friction on a hard stone.

However, the only really polished stone implement of Déné manufacture was the *eœlh* or "*casse tête*" of which figure 13 will give an idea. The specimen thereby illustrated is of a hard granite stone. A variety of that weapon, similar in form, but more elongated (being at least twice as long) was usually made of cariboo horn.

Apart from the common arrows, the Carriers made use of two other varieties of missiles of Sékanais origin. Both kinds were made from Cariboo horns. The first of these called *kachœnkwœlh* (cut arrow) by the Carriers, was awl-like in form and not less than six inches in length. The broader extremity thereof was hollowed out to receive a wooden shaft which served to dart it off from the bow like a common arrow, with this difference however that, when in motion, the horn point detached itself from the shaft. This projectile was deadly and intended only for use against an enemy or for killing large game. To shoot smaller game such as grouse, rabbits, etc., they had recourse to a curiously wrought triple arrow fastened to the shaft similar to that delineated in figure 14.

As defensive weapons they used two kinds of armours and a shield. The latter was oval in form like the Roman clypeus and generally made of closely interwoven branches of *Amelauchier alnifolia.* They gave it the name of *kelathœn* (that which is held with the hand).

While on the war-path, they also wore a kind of armour or cuirass consisting of dried sticks of the same kind of wood, arranged in parallel order and kept together with babiche lines interlaced in several places. This was common to the Kaidahs and other coast Indians. Another sort of armour, indigenous to the Déné nation, was the *peœsta* (wherein one sits). This had the form of a sleeveless tunic falling to the knees so that it afforded protection to the whole body save the head :—in hard fights the Dénés invariably shot kneeling. The armour or cuirass was of moose skin which, when sewn according to the proper pattern, was soaked in water, then repeatedly

rubbed on the sandy shores of a stream or lake and dried with the sand and small pebbles adhering thereto, after which it was thoroughly coated with a species of very tenacious glue, the principal ingredient of which was boiled isinglass obtained from the sturgeon. Being again before drying subjected to a thorough rubbing over sand, it received a new coating of the aforesaid glue. When this process had been repeated three or four times, it formed an armour perfectly invulnerable to arrows over the parts which were thus protected.

All these weapons and armours were in use among the Western Dénés, immediately prior, and even for some time subsequent, to the discovery of their country by Sir Alexander MacKenzie's party.[1]

XIII.

It would scarcely be proper to speak of war as an institution obtaining among the pre-historic Western Dénés. Although the various tribes despised and mistrusted each other, general fights were rare enough, and as surprises constituted the main part of their system of warfare, it followed that success was, as a rule, on the side of the assailants. Sometimes the whole population of a village would be massacred in a single night. In that event, the victors would chant their hymn of victory, generally improvised on the spot and composed of the last words uttered by their victims. After their return from the fray, they would also repeat it dancing for several nights in succession. In no instance was scalping resorted to, at least, on this side of the Rockies.

Such general massacres, however, were not of very frequent occur-

1 Abbé E. Petitot in his "*Appendice relatif aux armes de pierre des Indiens arctiques*" presented in 1875 to the Paris Geographical Society states that the Dénés of the Great MacKenzie Basin know only by tradition some of the above described war weapons, as well as the wooden masks spoken of in the previous paragraph. The two most northern tribes of the whole nation, the Loucheux or Kut-chins and the Hares contend, he says, that they formerly dwelt among a powerful nation which oppressed them and whose warriors wore the *peæsta* which he graphically describes without knowing that it was used here but a comparatively short time ago. Would not this be evidence tending to prove that the aforesaid Dénés migrations might have been North-Eastwards instead of Southward as, I think, is commonly believed? The learned Abbé is evidently mistaken when he affirms that none of these defensive weapons were used by the Dénés since their probable arrival on this continent. Because Samuel Hearne and MacKenzie who travelled in time of peace did not actually observe any of these weapons and cuirasses among the natives they visited, it does not follow that they were not used by them when on the war path. Indeed, many of the present older inhabitants of this lake, have seen in actual use all of the arms, offensive or defensive which I have endeavoured to describe.

rence. More commonly (and I should say quite often), the brothers and near relatives of a man whose death was attributed to the secret machinations of a *Tæyén* or medicine-man of a different village, would go armed cap-a-pie and kill the supposed author of their relative's death. As a natural consequence, his co-clansmen would come *en masse* to avenge his murder and then a regular battle would take place, inasmuch as both sides would be prepared for the occasion. The logical result of this was that security was rather precarious and friendly intercourse, even between neighbouring villages, was not as frequent as the short distance separating some of them would lead one to expect.

In no case was a whole tribe found united and, *a fortiori* two allied tribes confederated, against a common enemy. And this leads me to enter upon the subject of the Dénés' social institutions.

I may as well state at once that no form of government, in the strict sense of the term, nor any political organisation of any kind ever existed among them. Not only were the various tribes of the same stock entirely independent of one another, but even no tie of any sort ever connected the different villages of the Carriers, Chilhχ-otins and Western Nah'anés. The clans or gentes outstepped indeed the village limits; but they were social rather than political. For, though a member of anyone of them could claim recognition from any person of the same clan, however distant his village, he owed allegiance to no constituted head thereof.

Authority was represented in each locality by the college of *Tænezas* or notables which, *mutatis mutandis*, may be compared to the nobility of European nations. Their rank was strictly hereditary and was shared in by their children who were called *æzkezas*. The possible successor to the position however, was only the *tænezа's* eldest maternal nephew, whom he would generally bring up and educate himself in view of his future position. Should he have no such nephew, a younger brother, or failing him, even a maternal niece would regularly succeed him.

The notables were the sole proprietors of the tribe's hunting grounds, and as their name indicates ("the only men" is the nearest

equivalent therefor), they were regarded as the only men entitled to be heard upon any topic of interest to the tribe. Theirs was the privilege to use a hereditary name, to which was attached a particular song handed down from generation to generation; to dance first to the tune of said chant; and the privilege also of wearing insignia distinctive of their rank; to be assigned an honorable place in the ceremonial "pot-latches;" and, lastly, the right to pacify belligerents, settle disputes and otherwise exercise some authority in their respective villages.

By "authority" however, I should not be understood as meaning the strict right or power to command with the implicit co-relative of absolute and instantaneous obedience—except when it was a question of territorial rights. As there was scarcely any sanction to their injunctions, and no definite punishment for disregard of the same, it follows that the power of the notables was more persuasive than obligatory. Nevertheless, some instances are related of notables who shot dead fellow villagers, who were unmindful of their orders, without having had to answer "tooth for tooth" for the blood they shed. On the other hand, it was very seldom that their orders were despised, especially if seconded by some influential person—the natives instinctively submit to properly supported authority.

There were more than one of these notables belonging to the same clan and village and they were all of the same rank. It frequently happened indeed that one of them exercised prominent authority in the village, more generally than otherwise on account of his reputed wealth and liberality—but even such notable was more *prior inter pares* than the possessor of the titles and attributes distinctive of the modern chiefs.

This organization was common to all the Western Dénés except the Sékanais and Eastern Nah'anés who pass their lives in incessant peregrinations, at the command of their natural leaders, the eldest among the fathers of the families ordinarily concerting with the whole band.

XIV.

The Dénés of the old stock were generally long lived. As a proof of this, I need only to adduce the fact that last year there died at this place a man who remembered the arrival in this country of Sir Alexander MacKenzie in 1793. Many of the diseases which have since proved so fatal to the aborigines were then unknown. Those which sometimes visited them, had in the vegetable kingdom their known antidotes, the quintessence of which may be comprised in the word "purgative." They possessed also valued astringents in the castorum pods of the beaver and in the roots of heracleum, etc.

When these remedies, joined to the incantations of the "medicine-man" failed and death seemed imminent, the moribund's relatives were hastily summoned around his death bed. Supposing he was a *tœneza* the above mentioned hereditary family song was struck up by some person outside of his clan and was continued by exo-clansmen till he expired, while his relatives would then rend the air with many doleful wailings. As soon as he had passed away, two young men also of a different clan, were deputed to announce the news to the neighbouring villages. All of the people of these places that were fellow-clansmen of the departed notable were then expected to make presents to the messengers as a compensation for their trouble, after which the whole population would turn out in a body and come forward to mourn the defunct *tœneza* around the remains and at the same time console his relatives. To this end, while the deceased co-clansmen were lamenting their loss, a man of another clan would rise from the crowd and commence to dance to the tune of an improvised song. This was intended as a diversion to the mourners' feelings, and, as the strictest point of the Carriers' moral law is "nothing for nothing," the latter would immediately throw at the dancer any object he might intentionally mention in his chant and which thus became his property. This dance and giving away being repeated several times on several consecutive nights, the strangers would, if in winter-time (or even during the summer, if the mourners were not prepared for the occasion) return to their respective villages, and the remains would be provisionally placed at some distance from the habitations under a bark roof-like "shelter" by the side of which the widow

would erect for herself and children a small hut of similar form and material.

Thenceforth hers was a miserable lot indeed. From the very moment of her husband's decease to the time (two or three years later) of the final giving away of property in his honor, she was the slave of her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, one of whom would at once cut her hair to the roots and take care to renew the operation whenever needed as a badge of the abject condition of her widowhood She was also obliged to wear ragged clothes, and in case she was young and likely to re-marry when the period of mourning ceased, decency constrained her to pollute her face with gum lest her guardians (so they were called) should suspect her of desires unsuited to her condition. Meantime, she would be her master's real factotum and the women especially would endeavour to render her life as unbearable as possible, leaving her no other "privilege" (!) than that of nightly bewailing in as loud tones as she could for her departed husband.

Men who had lost their wives were obliged to undergo the same ordeal, though treated somewhat more humanely than the weaker sex.

When the future successor of the dead notable had succeeded in gathering a goodly amount of dressed moose and other skins and provisions, the inhabitants of all the surrounding villages were invited to witness the cremation of the corpse (such was the way the Carriers and Western Nah'anés disposed of their dead). The funeral pile being kindled in the outskirt of the village by men not belonging to the deceased's clan (who were paid on the spot by the latter's relatives) the widow was obliged by custom to embrace the remains of her late husband even though surrounded by the flames, amidst the howlings and wailings of his fellow-clansmen. When momentarily withdrawn by the bystanders, etiquette demanded from her repeated endeavours to burn herself along with the remains. Supposing she had not been a good wife, she was in many cases jostled by the mourners, and sometimes horribly disfigured with the view to diminish her chances of re-marriage. The cremation over, a bark hut was built on the spot and everybody would retire except the widow who had to dwell there during the period of her bondage. In the evening following the cremation, as a rule, would take place the "pot-latch" according to the rites which shall be described in the next paragraph.

Among the Carriers, the late notable's relations would, on the morrow, while shedding many a dutiful tear, carefully pick up from among the ashes of the pyre, the few remaining charred bones and hand them to the widow, who would, till the time of her liberation from her widow's bondage, constantly pack or carry them in a small satchel. Hence the name (Carriers) of these Indians. Men though reduced to a modified bondage during the mourning period for their wives, had not, however, to submit to this latter formality.

The procedure just described was—barring the ceremonial peculiar to a notable—the same in the case of all ordinary Carriers. But it differed widely among the Sékanais. These Indians, owing to their dislike to fish and their need of securing fresh supplies of meat, could never remain for any length of time at the same place. So, when they thought the death of a sick member of the band was certain to occur in the near future; they simply placed close to him as much provisions as they could spare, and, having erected with coniferous branches a sort of barrier to shelter their path from his gaze (which was considered ominous to the party), they would abandon him to his fate. Should he die before their departure, they would lower his hut down upon and thus cover his remains and start at once for another locality. Supposing the deceased was an influential person dear to the band, they would hollow a kind of coffin out of a large spruce tree and suspend his remains therein, on the forks formed by the branches of two contiguous trees. Some instances are also recounted in which the remains of such persons were closed up in a standing position in the hollow trunk of a large tree while in its natural state. The lid or door of these primitive coffins was usually formed of a split piece of wood which, when strongly laced with long switches of red willow, held it to the trunk of the tree in its original shape.

Bondage consequent upon widowhood was not practised by the Sékanais, nor were the various ceremonies accompanying succession to rank and title observed among them.

XV.[1]

The most inveterate among all the ceremonial customs of the Carriers, one which in some localities has remained proof against prohibitions from both the civil and religious authorities,—is their practice of giving extravagant repasts or "pot-latches" (Chinook word, meaning "giving away") in honor of their dead. When intended to commemorate an untitled person, one banquet suffices, and is the implicitly observed signal for the termination of the mourning and the liberation of the widow from bondage. But when given in honor of a deceased notable and as a visible signal of his nephew or brother's succession to his title and prerogatives, there are no less than six well defined courses successively given by his successor conjointly with his co-clansmen. Owing to the importance attached to these festivals by the natives, and despite the apparent puerility of some of their details, I feel I shall have to speak at some length of each of the six.

1. Supposing that a Tœneza has passed away, the first in the series of banquets given in his honor will take place three or four days after the arrival of the invited or expected strangers and may be repeated for several nights in succession. It is only of secondary importance and is called *Lhiz thœn hanatsœvœlhthih* ("or the taking away from the ashes") which means that the mortal remains are thereby removed from the "fire-place" where they had been lying since the notable's decease. It is given by the latter's future successor according to the following ceremonial which is strictly adhered to in the case of all subsequent or any banquets.

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1 As prefatory to this paragraph, I would beg leave to remind the comparative Sociologist of the ostentatious banquets in vogue among most of the ancient people, Assyrians, Persians, Egyptians, Greeks of the heroic period, etc., as evinced by the sacred Books, Genesis xlii; Judith xii; Esther i; Daniel v; Homer's Iliad and Odyssey (passim), etc. The student of mythology will also remember that in such repasts it was customary to give each guest his separate portion and to show one's regard for any person by helping him to a larger share than the other guests. In this manner Joseph treated his younger brother Benjamin, (Genesis xliii). So did Agamemnon act towards Ajax and Eumœus to Ulysses, (Iliad, book vii and Odyssey, xiv.)

In more recent times, we see the same custom prevailing among the Mongols who have many traits of resemblance both moral and physical with our Dénés. Thus when the princes and generals of their vast empire assembled in 1246 to elect a successor to Ogotai Khan, eating and drinking to excess formed a conspicuous part of the proceedings. Then also "every day they put on garments of a different colour distributed by the sovereign," says Piano Carpini, an eye witness. Again, "This ceremony (that of enthronisation) was followed by an enormous banquet . . . This feast was renewed every day for seven days in succession." In Huc's Christianity in China, Tartary etc." Volume i, page 146 and 148.

Everything being ready in one of the largest houses, the aspirant notable's maternal nephew (that is, his own presumptive heir) proceeds to call in every member of any but his uncle's clan, which he accomplishes by striking the ground with a ceremonial staff at the feet of the person thus invited without uttering a word. The future notable's fellow clansmen being reputed co-invitators with him go in of themselves. The *commune vulgus* being assembled in the lodge (before the notables who though the first invited are the last to come), the latter are introduced by the master of ceremonies who, pointing with his staff to their respective places (which is strictly defined by traditional usage), calls them individually by their hereditary names [1] repeating in loud tones for instance "Qi! qi! Rahul, qi! qi!" The interjections accompanying the proper name (Rahul) are of ancient origin and never used in common parlance. Then begins the repast or rather distribution of victuals, double or treble portions being allowed the notables present, the whole accompanied with copious libations of liquid bear's grease for the distribution of which ladles and spoons manufactured from the horns of the mountain goat, similar to those represented by figure 16, are brought into requisition. At the termination of this banquet, the aspirant notable tears a few dressed skins of leather in long strips of the width necessary to make mocassins, which he distributes to the assistants, taking care to give double size to those intended for the notables. This last distribution is in the Carrier's estimation the most important part of the whole proceedings, inasmuch as it is regarded as paramount to the atoning for the notable's death, and is practised whenever one wants to wipe out shame or remove grief.[2]

2. The second "potlatch" is given when a new supply of eatables and skins has been collected, and is in every respect but its aim identical with the first. It is intended as a celebration in honor of the deposition of the remains of the late Tœneza in the appointed place of respect in the house, even though said remains may have been previously cremated. So far, his successor is considered merely as an aspirant to his late uncle's title.

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1 This is never done except on special occasions, every notable having besides, at least, one other name.

2 Sometimes whole suits of dress are thus publicly given away.

3. *Tsœz tœzdillih,* ("the imposition of feather down.") This is one of the most important of the whole series and is tantamount to the aspirant successor's elevation to the rank of notable. It is given only after an interval of long and hard hunting by himself and his whole clan. Prior to the great banquet and distribution, a sufficient number of exo-clansmen, erect according to his directions, a rectangular fencing around the spot where his uncle's remains were cremated, taking their daily meals in a trough shaped carved vessel, the exclusive property of leading notables.[1] Then follows the distribution of eatables, of which the greater the quantity, the more powerful will be the influence of the future Tœneza. The population of all the surrounding, and sometimes very distant villages, is usually convoked for this grand festival which marks the red letter day *par excellence* in the Carrier's Calendar.

When everybody but himself and fellow clansmen have retired, the skins they are going to give away next day are counted and they agree among themselves as to those who shall be the chief recipients; after which emerging in Indian file, they proceed to place swan's down on the heads of those they intend to honor on the morrow. Etiquette requires that nobody be excepted from this ceremony. The persons thus marked out then give them a substantial supper.

Next day witnesses the aspirant notable's confirmation as successor to his uncle's rank. In the morning all the people are assembled in the usual way in the largest lodge or house in the village wherein the aspirant having on none but the most indispensable vestments, stands silent facing the pile of dressed skins which he is about to give away. After a short time his assistant takes swan's down from a small satchel made of the skin of that bird's neck and sprinkles it slightly on his hair. This being done, he takes one of the piled up skins, and, having previously extended it to the general gaze, puts it on the new notable's shoulders as one would a mantle; which ceremony he repeats in connection with every other skin taking care that all present have an opportunity afforded them of counting the same. At the very instant that he places the first skin on the new Tœneza's shoulders, one of his exo-clansmen intones the late notable's chant

1 These were given the form of a salmon or other totem animal of their possessor, and were similar to the carved troughs used in the Solomon Islands to prepare and pound food, cf. Proceedings of the London, (England) Royal Geographical Society, June, 1888, page 361.

(for which service he receives immediately a whole skin) which is taken up by the entire assembly except the latter's relatives who commence at once a strain of deafening lamentations. The new dignitary being now fairly laden with multiple mantles, they are then taken from his shoulders. This is the signal for the cessation of the singing. After this, all the dutiful tears are dried up as if by enchantment, whereupon the master of ceremonies blows swan's down on his head by means of repeated insufflations, thereby producing white undulating clouds significative of his new dignity; then he helps the notable to tear and distribute the whole pile of smoke dressed skins, not forgetting to set aside double sized strips for any absent notables. Henceforth, he is a real and accepted tœneza; but to enjoy all the prerogatives of his rank, he will have to make three more distributions.

4. *Natlh'adita* ("he sits down"). This is equivalent to the notable's enthroning. It is a distribution of clothes or skins, intended as a fee for the privilege of sitting at the traditional place of his predecessor, and is made on the occasion of his assistance at the next banquet given by a notable of a different clan. When entering the festival lodge the new Tœneza is followed by his wife packing the skins he is about to distribute. These are extended in a line by young men so that they may be duly counted by the crowd. "These he will give away on the occasion of his Enthronisation," will shout one of them, to which the crowd will answer in loud acclamations: *Sæmotget! Sæmotget!* words of ancient origin indicative of admiration and used only in this connection. After the distribution, the notable sits on his appointed seat of honor.

5. Now, should it become known that the following summer would witness the giving of the last of the series of banquets commemorative of his predecessor's death, on a certain arranged winter evening, while the new notable is sitting together with a band of young men in his house with closed doors, all his fellow notables and villagers congregate outside, and, at a given signal, the whole crowd breaks into vociferous applause upon which a song is struck up within (accompanied by a tambourine) by the aforesaid band of young men as singers. Then a tœneza wearing the insignia of his rank, the wig and ceremonial apron, will dance while keeping profoundly bowing

to the host and singers, and without interrupting his dance he will proceed to his place near the master of the lodge. All the notables present will then follow in their turn observing the same ceremonial. Should there be a female notable among them she will have precedence over any untitled member of the crowd. Instead of a wig, she wears a lofty crown-like head-dress,[1] adorned with strips of her totem-animal's skin and other ornaments. Her ceremonial apron is also much shorter than that of the male notables which falls to the feet and has the lower edge fringed with hanging beaver claws or small pebbles which during his dance produce a continual rattling sound.[2] She does not dance however, on entering the house; but bowing low keeps time with her head-dress to all the sounds of the tambourine. When all the assistants are gathered around the notable thus honored, he serves them a frugal supper after which they disperse to their respective homes.

6. This is the last and most important of all the festivals intended to commemorate the late notable's death. Previous to its celebration, people of the surrounding villages are invited to construct a new lodge for his successor, while the notables carve in the woods, away from the eyes of the curious, two wooden masks representing respectively the face of a man and of a woman. Meantime the most skilled workmen of the village carve out of a large cotton-wood tree two huge toads or grouse according to the clan to which the new *Tœneza* belongs. These different works have to be completed on the eve of the great banquet when the population of distant villages have congregated for the occasion. In the night when all are assembled in the new house, the notables who made the masks, concealed behind a screen formed by skin curtains, adjust them to the face of two young men whose persons are carefully concealed by blankets. After this the curtain is lifted up and the notables proceed to the centre of the assembly and commence—attired in their insignia—to dance in a group whilst the masked jesters make with their heads all sorts of comical movements. The chant used on this occasion has a peculiar

1 So did the Mongol women of the Middle Ages, according to William of Rubruck: "The costume of the women," he says, "does not differ greatly from that of the men, except that they wear a very lofty 'head-dress.'" *Relation des Voyages en Tartarie, Bergeron.*

2 This peculiarity reminds us of the *mepil* of the Jewish high priest, the most noticeable part of which was its fringe composed of little bells of gold alternating with coloured pomgranates. Exodus xxviii, 31 and 34.

rhythm and time. The dance over, the notables retreat behind the curtain which falls and hides them from view.

A new mask is added on the occasion of every subsequent funeral banquet given by the same notable, so that the number of jesters present at these festivities indicates the number of banquets given by him since he succeeded his late uncle.

Next day, in the morning, takes place the grand banquet, which sometimes lasts a whole day. On this occasion, the late tœneza's personal goods which to this day have remained untouched, are exhibited one after the other in full view of the crowd and amidst the lamentations of his relatives, care being taken not to name the deceased. Then also his charred bones, which so far have been daily packed by his widow, are suspended within the satchel to the rafters of the new house, after which, in the course of distributing eatables, his successor rubs his greasy hands on the widow's hair and covering her with a new blanket which he presents to her, says: "I hereby liberate thee; so thou mayest return to thy kindred and marry if thou pleasest."

On the morrow, prior to the general distribution of clothes and skins, not to let the medicine-men pass unnoticed amidst such solemnities, and to ensure their good will against any malady or ill which may befall the assembly, they are requested to make their preventive "medicine." With this end in view, four or five of the most famous capture (?) while dancing the soul or shade of each assistant and restore it to his head with solemn insufflations.

A peculiarity of the final distribution is that the *totem*, toad or grouse, having been placed at either side of the door, each new comer belonging to another clan than that of the host is bound by custom to present said totem with clothes and hunting implements which thereby become the new notable's property. Part of these he will, after the ceremony, divide among his fellow clansmen, keeping for himself only what he thinks he will be able to re-fund by offering to the totem of his present guests an exact equivalent on the occasion of the next banquet given by them. This will be observed by all the partakers of these so-called presents, which are really nothing but an exchange of property from clan to clan.

Then will follow the grand distribution of skins and clothes, after which the host will divide among his predecessor's relatives, all the latter's personal property and even present them with his own wearing apparel, reducing himself to a state of almost perfect nakedness. Then as a finale, the deceased's remains will be deposited in a box suspended on a carved wood column such as (though generally more ornamented than) those delineated in figure 15.[1]

XVI.

The above mentioned and any other dances were usually performed by a single person—generally a man. He would usually dance in a kind of jumping way, making with hands and head occasional gestures

[1] The Government Reports on Indian Affairs do not distinguish the different kinds of pot-latch but state many facts from which one may form an idea of the magnitude of these feasts. In November, 1883, at Lacksem, Valde's Island, B.C., a pot-latch was held which lasted a week and at which more than 2000 Indians and half-breeds were present. The entertaining tribe's savings of several years are said to have been given away, one young man contributing goods to the value of $400, (Report, 1884, p. 97). A Chief named Lohah in 1885 gave a pot-latch to about 2500 persons of different tribes at the village of Comeakin, B.C. He feasted his guests for over a month, then sent them away with his accumulated savings of the five previous years. 3000 Indians and half-breeds partook of a pot-latch at the Quamichean Agency, B.C., in June, 1886. It lasted a fortnight and impoverished the entertainers. The goods usually distributed consist of skins, horses, personal clothing, guns, canoes, blankets and in late years money. On one occasion in 1876 we read of $15,000 worth being distributed in presents, chiefly blankets which among the Indians west of the Rockies was then the standard of value (Report, 1876, p. 36). In another case the gifts consisted mainly of 134 sacks of flour, 140 pairs of blankets, apples and provisions=$700.

For some years the government has been trying to put down the pot-latch. The reasons assigned are: first, that it is wasteful in the extreme and impoverishes the givers; second, that by collecting together a large number of persons who are under no rule and are given to excess, it forms a danger to the public peace. At length an act was passed and was brought into force by proclamation of the 1st of January, 1885. It abolishes the pot-latch and makes its celebration a misdemeanour. It deals in a similar manner with another feast called *Tamanawas*. We have no detailed account of it such as Mr. Morice gives us of the pot-latch, but the *Tamanawas* would seem to consist of a Medicine Dance somewhat like the Thirst Dance of the North-West Crees and to be accompanied with lacerations. The more distant tribes of British Columbia preserve their ancient customs, and the older chiefs in places where civilization has penetrated defend their practices by arguments such as these:—"We have laboured for the goods, they are ours; why may we not give them to our friends? The white man has his feasts, his theatres, his churches. He is not hindered. We have only the pot-latch and dances for seasons of joy and sorrow, for entertainment and amusement. The pot-latch is long established, it relieves the agony of the deceased's surviving kindred and calls forth the sympathy of friends and neighbours. The presents ensure us a hearty welcome wherever we travel and are themselves but a return in kind for others which we received at other times. Is it not unjust to prohibit so ancient and so beneficial a custom?" Nevertheless, the pot-latch seems in a fair way towards extinction. I should mention that Mr. Lomas of the Cowichan Agency has been trying to convert the pot-latch into an Annual Industrial Exhibition, and has met with considerable success.

CH S. COM.

meant as an illustration of the chant executed by the crowd who kept beating time by clapping their hands one against the other. Besides, on grand occasions Indian tambourines were also used as an accompaniment to the singing.

Religious dances were unknown. The nearest approach thereto was the dance performed on the occasion of an eclipse. The Dénés believed this phenomenon to be due to the presence of gale or scab on the sun or moon. To preserve themselves from that dread malady and hasten the luminary's re-appearance (or cure), they would cautiously go out of their habitations, avoiding noise and loud talk, and then, ranging themselves one behind the other, they would start a kind of propitiatory dance to this effect: bending under an imaginary weight though carrying only an empty bark vessel, they would strike in cadence their right thigh, repeating at the same time in piteous tones "*Hanintih; ge!*" "Come back therefrom."

On such occasions the Chilhχotins neither danced nor sang; but among them men and women having their clothes tucked up as when they travel and leaning on a staff as if heavily laden, they walked in a circle till the end of the eclipse.

Another observance formerly in vogue among the Carriers was the *the'tsœlrwœs* (precipitate exit). This was analogous in character to, if not identical with, a practice of which we read as having existed among certain European and Asiatic nations, the *Lycanthropia* of the ancients, the *Loupgarou* of France, the Persian *Ghoule* the Teutonic *Wehr-wolf*; all probably the result of a simulated ecstacy of superstitious origin. In the case in question and on the occasion of a large gathering of aborigines, a band of men would suddenly run out of a lodge and, simulating madness, would, amidst wild yells and incoherent songs, make frantic efforts to bite the passers-by or, failing in this, they would seize upon a dog and devour him on the spot.

Ordinary amusements consisted of the *nœzaz*, or throwing of long polished sticks on the snow, the distance reached determining the winner; and gambling which is of two kinds: *nœta* and *alté*. The first game which greatly resembles the *tsi-mei* of the Chinese[1] is played by a group of natives one of whom concealing in his hands

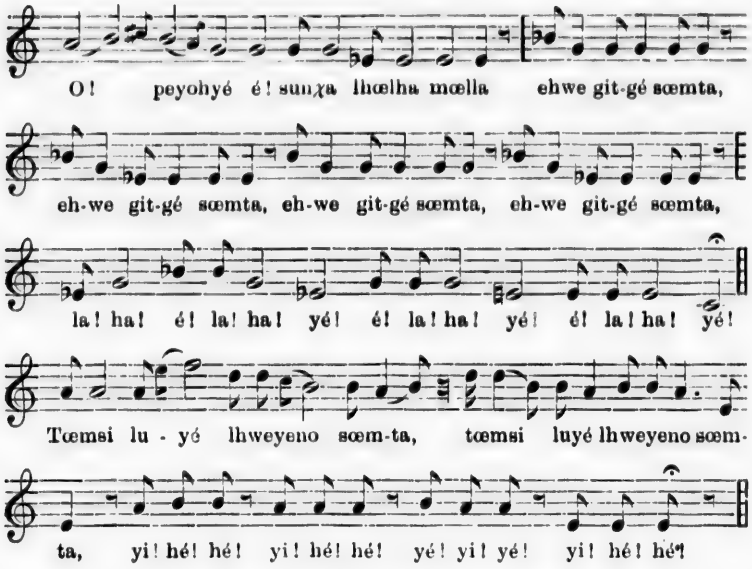
1 L' Empire Chinois, par l' abbé Huc.

two small sticks or bones differently carved keeps jerking his arms and body to the tune of a particular song, so that he may give as little indication as possible to the rival players as to which hand contains the winning stick. A tambourine or some appropriate substitute, such as a tin-pan, is continually beaten as an accompaniment to the game.

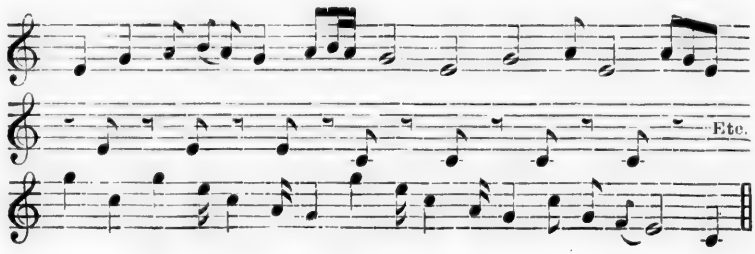
This is not the case with *alté* which is played (or rather was played, for it has fallen into desuetude) silently by only two partners with a multitude of small sticks and which is too complicated to be described here. A few other games were also played formerly, but not so commonly as those just referred to, so that I deem it unnecessary to do more than simply mention the fact.

The chants accompanying these games and dances were, musically speaking, of the poorest description,—aboriginal music being of a very primitive character. They are generally composed either of a single musical phrase repeated *ad infinitum* or of a few musical phrases without co-relation or cohesion undergoing the same sempiternal repetitions.

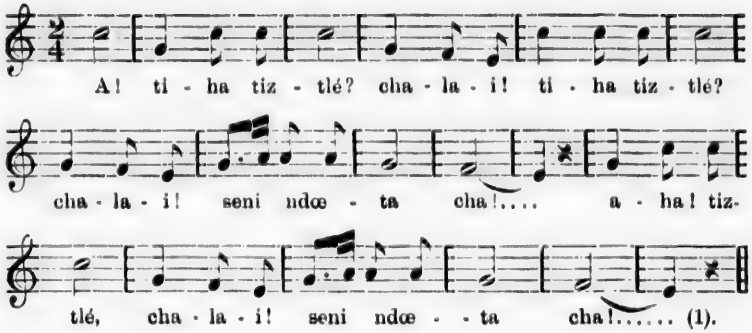
These chants may be classified under two heads: those with ancient words and those with modern or no words. The first are those traditional songs which, among the Carriers, are the exclusive appanage of the notables and are transmitted from generation to generation. They claim that the words thereof are remnants of their primitive language. They are at present quite unintelligible. Although each of their component sounds is familiar with the Dénés' vocabulary, yet a close comparison with the actual Carrier, Chilhχotin, Sékanais and three Eastern dialects of which I have complete dictionaries before me, fails to give a clue as to their original meaning. This circumstance is of itself strong evidence in favour of the high antiquity of the "melodies," as well as of the words: for since they have preserved the latter with such scrupulous care amidst the gradual variations of their language, I do not see why they should not be supposed to have also taken particular pains not to change the former. The two specimens given here will explain themselves better than could an extended description from me. Let me however remark that aboriginal rhythm is so different from ours that it is impossible to set it to time.



Following are two other examples of native music, the first of which is the "melody" used in playing *nœta*, and the second, one of the Dénés' pastime songs which, as will be seen, are little more than polished yells, both are without words.



In fine, I give below for the sake of comparison the great "*barcarolle*" or boating song of the Carriers. It is of modern though Déné origin, and this circumstance will explain the fact that in spite of the irregularity of the finale, both rhythm and melody are more consonant with our musical ideas and evince intercourse with white singers.



XVII.

Apart from the superstitious dances of which mention has been made in the preceding paragraph, the Western Dénés observed no religious ceremonies. They made no sacrifices, worshipped no Deity and had no definite *cultus*, unless we dignify with that name the shamanism of the Northern Asiatic races which obtained among them. True, they vaguely believed in a kind of impersonal and undefined Divinity, not quite pantheistic; but rather more so than individual, almost co-essential with the celestial forces, the cause efficient of rain and snow, winds and other firmamental phenomena. They called it *Yuttœre* ("that which is on high") in Carrier. But they did not worship this power—they rather feared it and endeavoured to get out of its reach, or, when this was impossible, to propitiate it and the spirits who were supposed to obey it, with the help and through the incantations of the *nelhgèn* or conjuror. This shaman was credited, when exercising his mysterious art, with the power of controlling the coming or departing of evil spirits. Even when not actually conjuring, he was believed to be able to kill by his mere will any objectionable person. His services were called into requisition in time of famine, to prevent tempests, procure favorable winds, hasten the arrival of salmon and ensure its abundance; but more generally in case of sickness which they believed to be concrete (not unlike the microbes of modern chemists) and always due to the presence or ill will of spirits.

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[1] "A! how is it that she goes like a fish, chalai! my mind is sick, cha, etc., etc."

When worked into a state of trance by personal exertions, the singing of his own magic chant, the incessant beating of drums and the rattling of the castanet with which he accompanied his dance, the shaman would declare himself to have fallen under the control of his familiar genius. Therefore, pointing its image (fish, bird, mammal, etc.) in the direction of the patient, he would dance towards him and drop on his head his spirit's representatives which (eye witnesses assure me) would at once fade away. Then sucking that part of the body which most ached, he would take out of his mouth either a thorn, a bug, a toad, etc., which he would exhibit as the cause of the complaint. Then, after a momentary recess from the patient he would dance back to him and lo! the image of his genius would come back of itself to his outstretched arms, and the patient would shortly feel all right.

In desperate cases, when the patient had already lost consciousness and death seemed to be fast approaching, the conjuror, if he was at all acquainted with his art, would, in the course of singing and dancing, suddenly fall apparently senseless to the ground and feigning sleep, he would dream and be supposed to have gone to the regions of the ghosts. In badly articulated words he would be heard beseeching the moribund's shade or self to return to his body, for the sake of his friends, etc.; after some little time he would awaken at the proper moment, and cautiously and noiselessly take said shade in the hollow of his hands, and with repeated insufflations restore it to the patient's head. Was this really an effect of an over excited imagination on the part of a half conscious subject, or was it due to preternatural forces? Be this as it may, the elderly men all assure me that in such cases the moribund immediately revived.

To the proper understanding of the foregoing, I must say a word concerning aboriginal psychology. The Dénés believed man to be vivified by a soul which to them was nothing else than his natural warmth (*nezæl*) and which as such died with the body. But besides this, they credited every human being—indeed many still hold to that belief—with the possession of another self or shade (*netsin*) which was invisible as long as he enjoyed good health, but appeared wandering about in one form or another whenever disease or death was imminent. In order therefore to prevent either the one or the

other, their endeavours would be directed towards catching it back. With this end in view, they would hang up in the evening the patient's mocassins previously stuffed with feather down, and next morning, should the down be warm, they would with great care and silence put them back on his feet with his supposed shade therein. Whenever the moribund lay unconscious they believed his double to have departed for the land of the shades or spirits, though after death it received another name (*nezul*) and was then supposed to be the impalpable form of the man's previous self. We thus see that the immortality of the soul, though in an imperfect manner, was admitted by these people.

Concerning the state of these shades and the regions they inhabit after death, their notions were rather vague and contradictory. Though all of them seemed to agree that their condition was miserable, since their only food was dried toads (which among the Dénés are the uncleanest of animals) yet they do not seem to have known or imagined much regarding the regions in question.

The following myth may however give a fair idea of the belief entertained by the Carriers on this subject.

"A long time ago two young men having got lost in the woods, reached in the course of their wanderings a certain spot where the trunk of a tree entirely hollowed out by age and decay was lying on the ground. Out of curiosity they crawled in to see where it led to as only one end was visible. After some hard walking on all fours through a dark subterranean passage, they reached a place full of snakes, toads and lizards. Much frightened they endeavoured to go back; but could not—it was an awful place. Yet, summoning up their courage they hurriedly ran through it and after more underground journeying, the road widened and darkness ceased. Then they suddenly found themselves to be on the top of a hill commanding the view of a broad river on the other side of which stood a village. This consisted of innumerable board houses, some of which were black, others red—it was the abode of the shades who were then enjoying themselves on the lawn. Nobody could have an idea of their number and they were making a deafening noise, caused by the interest they seemed to take in their sport.

"At this sight, one of the young men ran away and hid himself in the bush. As for his cousin (such he was), perceiving several

black and red canoes hauled on the other side of the river, he halloed for somebody to come and take him across. But the tumult was such that they could not hear him. At last, after repeated efforts to attract attention, having inadvertently yawned, one of them heard the movement of his jaws.[1] Having apprised his fellow spirits of the fact some of them at length came across to fetch him.

"But he had no sooner stepped into their black canoe than he sank down with the part his foot had touched which seemed to be elastic. Which seeing, the spirits at once smelt him. 'He does not smell of smoke,' they said, and then they learned that he had not been burnt. Therefore, madly seizing him in their fleshless arms, they tossed him up in the air as one does a ball, until nothing remained of his former self but his empty skin. In that state they threw him in the river where a big fish swallowed him at once. His cousin who all this time had been in hiding then set out to return to the land of the living and this time without any fear of the snakes and toads, for his sojourn in the regions of the shades had made him another man. While in the act of crawling back in the hollow tree through which he had entered, he heard a terrific voice calling: "Grandson! grandson!" Then at the end of the subterranean conduit, he came upon a giant who adopted him as his grandson. After a very long series of wonderful experiences with this new grandfather, he finally went up above and it is he that we now see standing on the moon."

Such is the Déné myth, or rather part of myth or legend, for what they narrate of this couple is far too long to be repeated here. Now is it not strange that we should find here among hyperborean Indians, the belief in this very Tartarean river which plays such a role in the mythologies of ancient Rome and Athens? Is there any noticeable difference between this broad river of the Dénés and the Styx-atra of Virgil? And does not their hero's experience in the infernal regions offer remarkable analogies with those ascribed by the Greeks and Latins to Theseus and Hercules, Orpheus and Æneas? It is also worthy of notice that this belief of the Dénés, as evinced by the

[1] To understand this particular circumstance of the Dénés' legend, one must know that the nation regard yawning as ominous, and believe it to be a calling back of the departed ghosts to earth.

above legend, that entrance to the abode of the shades is denied to those who have not received the honors of sepulture (typified among them by cremation) was common to most ancient nations, and is still to be found among several modern barbarous people.

But I perceive that I am becoming didactic when I intended to content myself with the mere exposition of facts. Let us be brief.

Metempsychosis was believed in by the Carriers and the Sékanais and very likely by the two other tribes also, though I could not positively affirm this. It amounted in their estimation, to the regeneration of persons who had led a virtuous life and were supposed to be rewarded therefor by a new birth. Transformations into beings of a lower order however, than that of their former condition, were repugnant to their psychological ideas.

They also attached to dreams the same importance as did most people of antiquity. It was while dreaming that they pretended to communicate with the supernatural world, that their shamans were invested with their wonderful power over nature, and that every individual was assigned his particular *nagwal* or tutelary animal-genius. Oftentimes they painted this genius with vermilion on prominent rocks in the most frequented places, and these rough inscriptions are about the only monuments the immediate ancestors of the present Dénés have left us.

XVIII.

Closely related to a people's religious beliefs are their superstitious observances, and, as a rule, the more the former have deviated from original truths, the more will the latter be found to have developed both in number and relative consideration. This is strictly true of the Western Dénés who, lacking even the primordial notion of a Supreme Being, were encumbered with a multitude of vain observances to which they attached the greatest importance. I have already in the course of this monograph incidentally hinted at some of them. Yet, before bringing it to a close, I feel that I shall have to add a few words on this subject. To avoid the tediousness necessarily resulting from a long nomenclature of apparent trivialities,

230860

I will make a choice and confine my remarks to a few of those ceremonial rites which may be of interest to the sociologist.

Prominent among these are the observances peculiar to the fair sex, and many of them are remarkably analogous to those practised by the Hebrew women, so much so that, were it not savouring of profanity, the ordinances of the Déné ritual code might be termed a new edition "revised and considerably augmented" of the Mosaic ceremonial law. Among the Carriers, as soon as a girl had experienced the first flow of the menses which in the female constitution are a natural discharge, her father believed himself under the obligation of atoning for her supposedly sinful condition by a small impromptu distribution of clothes[1] among the natives. This periodical state of women was considered as one of legal impurity fateful both to the man who happened to have any intercourse, however indirect, with her, and to the woman herself who failed in scrupulously observing all the rites prescribed by ancient usage for persons in her condition.

Upon entering into that stage of her life, the maiden was immediately sequestered from company, even that of her parents, and compelled to dwell in a small branch hut by herself away from beaten paths and the gaze of passers-by. As she was supposed to exercise malefic influence on any man who might inadvertently glance at her, she had to wear a sort of head-dress combining in itself the purposes of a veil, a bonnet and a mantlet. It was made of tanned skin, its forepart was shaped like a long fringe completely hiding from view the face and breasts; then it formed on the head a close fitting cap or bonnet, and finally fell in a broad band almost to the heels. This head-dress was made and publicly placed on her head by a paternal aunt, who received at once some present from the girl's father. When, three or four years later, the period of sequestration ceased, only this same aunt had the right to take off her niece's ceremonial head-dress.

[1] Might not this distribution be considered as a coincident equivalent vestige of the animal offerings prescribed by the Book of Leviticus, chapter v., for the expiation of sins (including legal uncleanness)? One should not forget the greatly altered circumstances in the midst of which the Déné now live, nor the fact that their only domestic animal, the dog, is to them as to the Jews, an unclean animal. On the other hand, having lost the knowledge of an only God through probable peregrinations among, and commiscegenation with, shamanistic asiatic races, they have no constituted priesthood, to receive these offerings and may reasonably be supposed to have substituted therefor the aggregate of their equals.

Furthermore, the girl's fingers, wrists and legs at the ankles and immediately below the knees, were encircled with ornamental rings and bracelets of sinew intended as a protection against the malign influences she was supposed to be possessed with. To a belt girding her waist were suspended two bone implements called respectively *Tsænkuz* (bone tube) and *Tsiltsæt* (head scratcher). The former was a hollowed swan bone to drink with, any other mode of drinking being unlawful to her. The latter was fork-like and was called into requisition whenever she wanted to scratch her head—immediate contact of the fingers with the head being reputed injurious to her health. While thus secluded, she was called *asta*, that is "interred alive" in Carrier, and she had to submit to a rigorous fast and abstinence. Her only allowed food consisted of dried fish boiled in a small bark vessel which nobody else must touch, and she had to abstain especially from meat of any kind, as well as fresh fish. Nor was this all she had to endure; even her contact however remote with these two articles of diet was so dreaded that she could not cross the public paths or trails, or the tracks of animals. Whenever absolute necessity constrained her to go beyond such spots, she had to be packed or carried over them lest she should contaminate the game or meat which had passed that way, or had been brought over these paths; and also for the sake of self-preservation against tabooed, and consequently to her, deleterious food. In the same way she was never allowed to wade in streams or lakes, for fear of causing death to the fish.

It was also a prescription of the ancient ritual code for females during this primary condition to eat as little as possible, and to remain lying down, especially in course of each monthly flow, not only as a natural consequence of the prolonged fast and resulting weakness; but chiefly as an exhibition of a becoming penitential spirit which was believed to be rewarded by long life and continual good health in after years.

These mortifications or seclusion did not last less than three or four years. Useless to say that during all that time marriage could not be thought of, since the girl could not so much as be seen by men. When married, the same sequestration was practised relatively to husband and fellow villagers—without the particular head-dress and

rings spoken of—on the occasion of every recurring menstruation. Sometimes it was protracted as long as ten days at a time especially during the first years of co-habitation. Even when she returned to her mate, she was not permitted to sleep with him on the first nor frequently on the second night, but would choose a distant corner of the lodge, to spread her blanket, as if afraid to defile him with her dread uncleanness.

The birth of a child was also the occasion of temporary seperation from her husband.[2] It is noticeable that this was more protracted after the birth of a female than after that of a male child.[3] Moreover, after this seclusion, custom obliged the parents to make an offering in the shape of a distribution of clothes, meant as a final purification for the mother and a sort of redemption of the child.[4]

Boys who attained the age of puberty had their wrists, ankles and legs below the knee encircled with rings made of sinew twisted with feather down. To neglect this rite would have been in their estimation to call for precocious infirmities which would have hindered the young man from performing the duties of a good hunter.

The distinction between clean and unclean animals was as strictly defined among them as it was among the Jews.[5] In the same way, until quite a recent date, no woman would partake of blood[6] and both men and women abhorred the flesh of a beaver which had been caught and died in a trap, and of a bear strangled to death in a snare, because the blood remained in the carcase.

I think also that we may appropriately find in an ancient custom of the Chilhχotins, that of public flagellation, an unconscious fulfilment of this precept of the Mosaic law: "They shall lay him down and shall cause him to be beaten before them."[7]

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[1] Compare with the prescriptions of Leviticus xv., 19.

[2] Cf. Leviticus xii., 2.

[3] Ibid xii., 4, 5.

[4] Ibid xii., 6.

[5] Cf. Leviticus xi.

[6] Ibid. *passim.*

[7] Cf. Deuteronomy xxv., 2.

Various other observances—whose name is legion and frequently of a puerile nature—were formerly in vogue among the Déné hunters, but as they are of no particular interest to the sociologist, I will refrain from enumerating them.

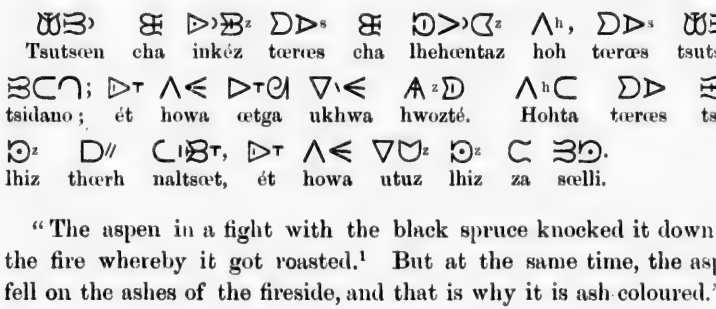
XIX.

Such as I have described them were, even as recently as twenty years ago, the Chilhχotins, Carriers, Sékanais and Nah'anés. Such, to a great extent have remained the two last named tribes. As yet, the only representatives of our race among them have been, with few exceptions, the missionaries, gold miners and the Hudson's Bay Company's officers and employees. Among the exceptions are two villages of the Southern Carriers which happen to be in the vicinity of small white settlements. Be it said to the shame of modern civilization, this proximity has proved in every way detrimental to the aborigines' moral and material welfare. Intoxicating liquors unscrupulously proffered them have demoralized the unfortunate natives, while immoral relations between their women and the whites have engendered maladies previously unknown and which have deprived the former of that fecundity which was formerly their pride. However, let us not exaggerate; even in this respect they have stood their ground much better than many Indian tribes which I could mention.

In places where the white race is practically identified with the Hudson's Bay Company's people, the Dénés have fairly progressed. With the exception of the Sékanais, they now dwell in comfortable log houses, built after the style of the country, have neat enough stables for their horses and cattle and they cultivate what will grow in small clearings near their villages, without abandoning their former and more lucrative pursuits,—hunting and fishing. The Hudson's Bay Company, which in most places has retained the virtual monopoly of the fur trade among them, treats them paternally, helps them liberally in cases of distress and scrupulously avoids the sale of hurtful stimulants to them.

Although the Dénés, and especially the Carriers, literally crave for knowledge, yet, owing to the paucity of missionaries among them, religious instruction is about all that can be given them so far. In these latter years however, an effort has been made by the writer of

this paper to teach them to read and write their own language, and the result has been really wonderful. In order to attain this satisfactory and promising result, he has had to compose a syllabic alphabet somewhat on the principle of that so suitably invented by the late Mr. Evans for the Cree language; but which he soon found to be totally inadequate to render correctly the numerous and delicate sounds of the Déné dialects. Besides (why should I not say it?) it lacks that method and logic which have been applied to the new or improved syllabics and which have thereby simplified the acquisition of the language. I am now continually in receipt of letters from Indians whom I never taught and who have learned to read after one or two weeks (in some cases I might say three or four days) private instruction from others. The following Carrier apologue written with the new signs will serve as an illustration thereof.


Tsutsœn cha inkéz tœrœs cha lhehœntaz hoh tœrœs tsutsœn
tsidano; ét howa œtga ukhwa hwozté. Hohta tœrœs tsépa
lhiz thœrh naltsœt, ét howa utuz lhiz za sœlli.

"The aspen in a fight with the black spruce knocked it down in the fire whereby it got roasted.[1] But at the same time, the aspen fell on the ashes of the fireside, and that is why it is ash-coloured."

And, I believe, I may now close this monograph, not that the subject is exhausted, far from it. There are even several points connected therewith which for the sake of brevity I have left untouched. Moreover, much remains to be said anent the question of the Western Dénés, probable origin and quite a volume might be written concerning their wonderfully rich language. One could, for instance, propose to the admiration of the philologist the prodigious multiplicity of its verbs which, when under all their forms, aggregate to the incredible number of about 150,000!—the astonishing quantity of their varieties which comprise verbs affirmative and negative, active and passive, reflective and mutual, impersonal and unipersonal, potential and generalizing, objective and subjective, verbs of rest,

[1] In allusion to the parched appearance of its bark.

verbs of locomotion, verbs of incubation, etc., etc. But to do so would be to enlarge beyond the scope of the information asked for by the recent circular of the Canadian Institute which I have endeavoured to answer through these pages, and then, according to the French proverb, "*A chaque jour suffit sa peine.*" On the other hand, what is not done to-day may, with God's help, be accomplished at some future time.

FIG. 1.—CARVED TOTEMS.

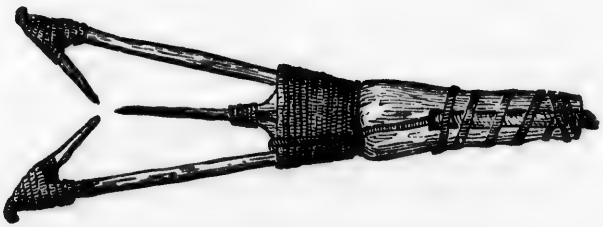


FIG. 2.—CARRIER HARPOON; $\frac{1}{8}$ SIZE.

FIG. 3.—CHILHχOTIN DOUBLE-DART; $\frac{1}{7}$ SIZE.

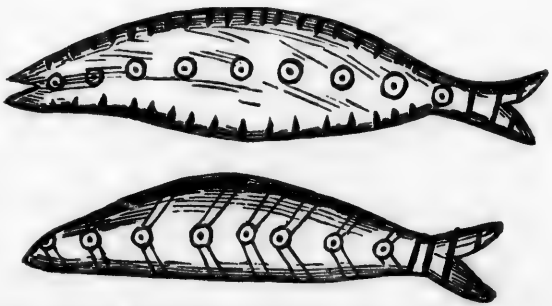


FIG. 4.—BONE COREGONE FRY, (used as bait); NAT. SIZE.

FIG. 5.—HORN DART; ½ SIZE.

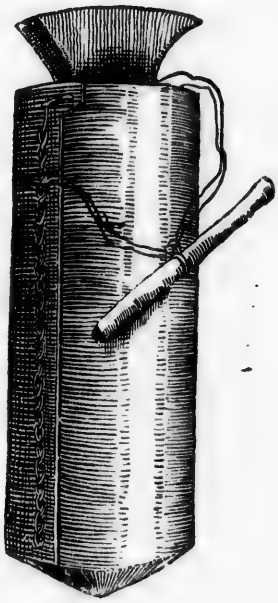


FIG. 6.—BARK BOTTLE; ½ SIZE.

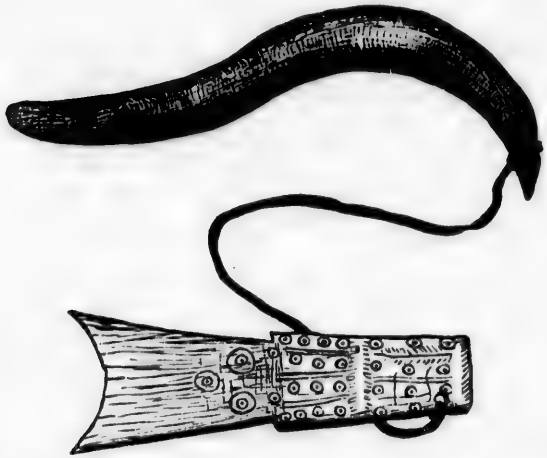


FIG. 7.—BARK PEELER AND CAMBIUM SCRAPER; ½ SIZE.

FIG. 8.—BONE CHISEL OR SCRAPER; ⅓ SIZE.

FIG. 9.—BONE SCRAPER; ⅓ SIZE.

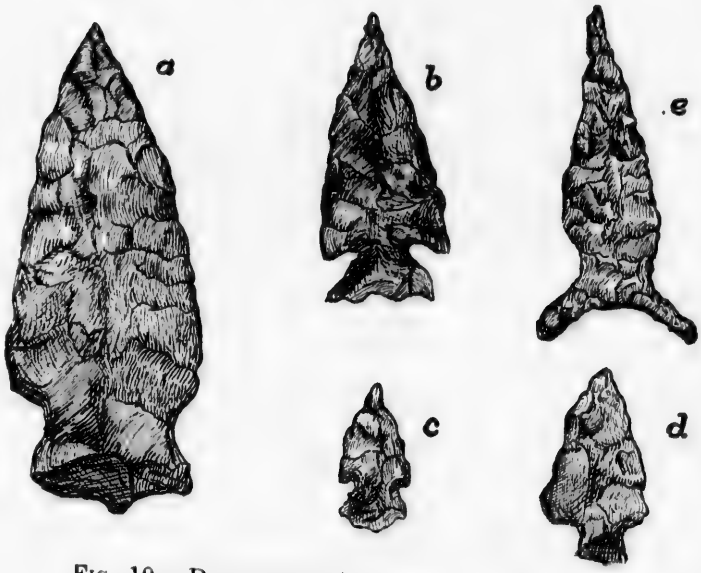


FIG. 10.—DENE FLINT ARROW-HEADS; NAT. SIZE.

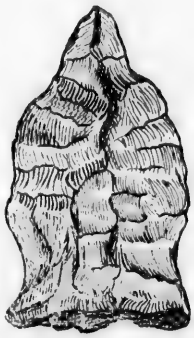


FIG. 11.—BOW-POINT; NAT. SIZE.

FIG. 12.—SPEAR-HEAD; $\frac{1}{3}$ SIZE.

FIG. 13.—STONE "Casse-tête;" $\frac{1}{3}$ SIZE.

FIG. 14.—BONE TRIPLE ARROW; $\frac{1}{2}$ SIZE.

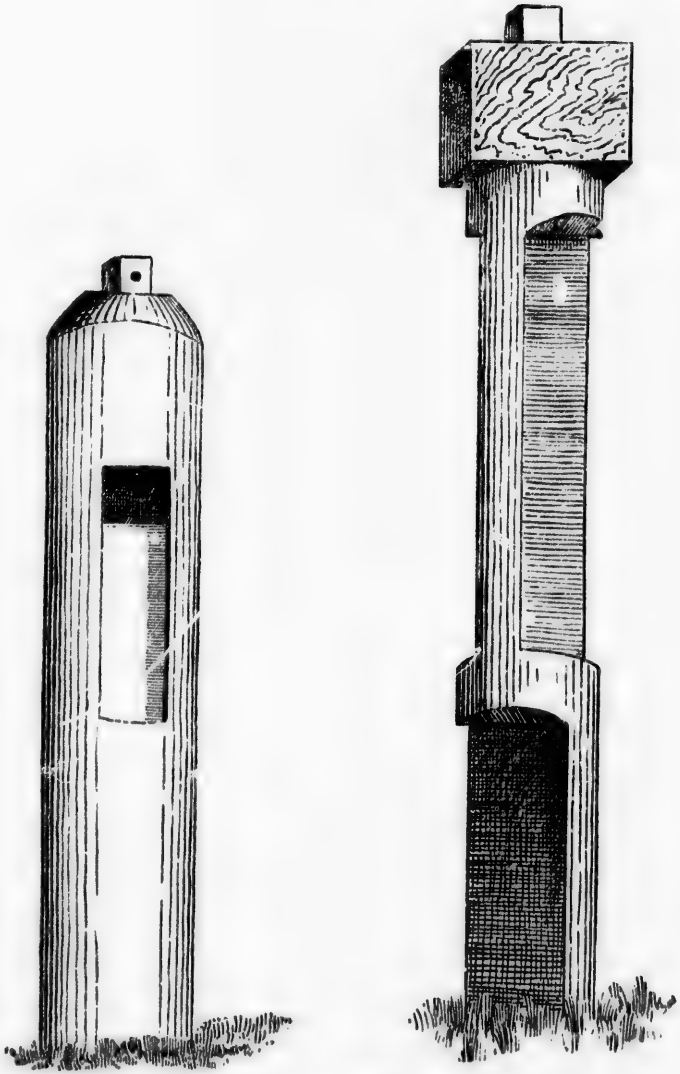


FIG. 15.—FUNERAL POSTS.

FIG. 16.—HORN LADLE AND SPOON; ¼ SIZE.

BRIEF SUMMARY.

Introduction to Paper on the Western Dénés.

I. Classification of Tribes, population and habitat.
II. Physical characteristics—wearing apparel.
III. Habitations, &c.,—moral characteristics.
IV. Clan organization, exogamy, ranking of relationships.
V. Marriages, contracting of.
VI. Effect of marriage on property and succession.
VII. Birth and care of children—vital statistics.
VIII. Modes of hunting.
IX. Fishing.
X. Preserving berries.
XI. Arts and Industries.
XII. War implements.
XIII. War and social organization.
XIV. Modes of disposing of the dead.
XV. Solemnities.
XVI. Amusements—specimens of Déné music.
XVII. Religious beliefs—medicine-men.
XVIII. Superstitious observances.

Conclusion with sentences in the Déné languge written with newly invented characters.

ERRATA.

Page	110,	Line	17	from the top—	*for*	Nahanés	*read*	Nah'anés.
"	110,	bottom line			"	t. chene	"	t-chené.
"	112,	Line	6	from the top	"	Nah-anés	"	Nah'-anes.
"	"	"	10	" " "	"	Tsekenné	"	T'sekenné.
"	"	"	15	" " "	"	Tsatens,	"	T'satens.
"	113,	"	12	" " "	"	Nah-anes	"	Nah'-anes.
"	114,	"	2	" " "	"	Sékanais	"	Sekanais.
"	115,	line	4	from the bottom	*for*	Dentalium Indianorum	*read*	dentalium indianorum.
"	116,	"	1	" " top	"	Dentalium	"	dentalium.
"	"	"	"	" " "	"	Hyaqua	"	hyaqua.
"	125,	"	6	" " "	"	Tænezoi	"	Tæneza.
	129,	"	2	" " bottom	"	hwonœth'a	"	hwonœlh'a.

[The following letter dated 30th June, 1888, was received from A. Bowen Perry Esq. Inspector, North-West Mounted Police, Prince Albert, North-West Territory.—CH. S. COM.]

SIR :—

I have to acknowledge your Sociological Circular of June '88. I fully agree with you as to the importance of the work with which your circular deals. Such information as you require must be obtained speedily for the state of the Indians is changing most rapidly. Old customs are passing away; their ceremonies are almost of the past, certainly with many tribes; their family customs are assimilating to those of their white brethren; and in fact in almost every section named in your circular the information to be obtained will be of a hearsay character. I speak more particularly of this district of Saskatchewan. The Indians are all Crees with one exception, a small band of renegade Sioux from Minnesota.

Missionaries have for many years labored among the Cree Indians and with no little success. The Crees have for some time devoted themselves to farming and abandoned their nomadic life. Schools have been maintained. These influences combined with the strong and successful attempt of the government to break up old habits and customs have effected a complete change in the Indian. character and habits. Not always for the best it must be admitted. With civilization, disease has been introduced, immorality has increased and physical degeneration ensued. It seems that physical degeneration universally follows the semi-civilization of the Indian The causes are many. Change of food, from fresh buffalo meat and fish to a diet of badly baked bread and bacon. The bread is unleavened; the flour being simply mixed in water and half baked in a frying pan or in ashes. Consequently the bannock as the bread thus made is called, is very indigestible and unfit for food. Again in their old life they wandered about from place to place. lived in lodges which afforded plenty of ventilation. Now they live the year around, or the greater part of it, for some of them take to their lodges in the summer,

in small log huts, ill lighted, unventilated, half filled with smoke and crowded together. Dirty and careless in their habits, it is not long before the hut becomes filthy and the ground around saturated. Remember that the huts are clumped together and the unhealthy state of the present Indian habitation on a Government Reserve is apparent. The agents and employees of the Indian department do what they are able to encourage the Indians to build larger houses and keep more cleanly habits, but as far as I know with little success. Disease marks them for her own; if of a contagious or infectious nature it runs its course; for the last two or three years measles have prevailed amongst the Northern Indians, and with a deadly result. Preventible diseases are most terrible. Amongst the Southern tribes of the Territories especially it is the exception to see a healthy well developed Indian child. The Northern tribes have not suffered to the same extent but still have not escaped. What appears to me to be another cause for the physical degeneration of the Indian is the want of exercise. When the Indian was compelled to earn his own living by the hunt he was compelled to live in the open air and to take sufficient exercise to develop himself physically. Now the Treaty Indian, relying on a paternal Government for rations, spends his time lazily about the Reserve exerting himself unwillingly and gorging himself with unwholesome food which is lavishly provided on some of the Reserves.

If I might suggest, it would be perhaps well to have the present state of the Indians authentically recorded. The change from barbarism to civilization is interesting and the gradual development will illustrate one of the Social laws. It is not always well to trust to official reports and government records to record the true facts of the Indians' state. They seldom deal with what will be of historical value nor do they always give unvarnished and plain statements.

As an offshoot of the Indians I would call your attention to the half breeds both English Scotch and French. Their origin and history are but little known, their habits and customs in the past unregistered. Having been in contact with the French half-breeds for the past three years I have become possessed of some very interesting facts concerning them. Equally with the Indian their future is problematical. I therefore think that your Institute might investigate the offshoot of

the Indians as well as the Indians. I shall be very happy to give any information in my power which may be of any use. There are many gentlemen in the Territory who would be able to give you varied interesting and accurate information, and thinking it possible that their names may not be known to you, I take the liberty of giving you a list which you will find enclosed.

The subject which you have undertaken to investigate is most extended and I believe that it will be a reproach to the literary men of Canada and Canadians generally if the question be not thoroughly exhausted and the results accurately recorded.

You have my hearty sympathy.

Critical note on Mr. J. B. Tyrrell's paper, entitled "Catalogue of the Mammalia of Canada exclusive of the Cetacea," by Ernest E. Thompson.

Being one of the members of the Institute who objected to the publication of Mr. Tyrrell's paper on account of its being without value as a zoological contribution, I have been asked to put my objections in more specific form for publication as a part of the Proceedings and as a fitting commentary on the paper. But since a full extended critique on the errors and vague generalizations of which it is chiefly composed, would far exceed the limits of allotted space, and would result in a paper more lengthy than the original, I will point out briefly the wrong principles on which it is based and will give a few examples of the matter that chiefly is reprehensible in the catalogue.

The only value that a scientific paper in this field can have, must come either from its new facts or from its carefully compiled and collated facts, and of course in both cases absolute precision and correctness are essential.

In the case of compiled facts, it is, not merely a rule of courtesy, but an inflexible law of scientific writing that all quotation and assistance must be acknowledged with due credit to its proper authority. It is hardly credible that any one will deny what is so fully accepted by all experienced writers, and yet it appears as though Mr. Tyrrell had set out with the express intention of running counter to these principles throughout his paper.

Passing over without comment the general vagueness in all matters relating to geography, and the annoying omission of dates in nearly all references to time, I will briefly direct attention to a few characteristic paragraphs. The Panther (*Felis concolor*) is given as, "Found in rough wooded regions in Southern Quebec, etc." If the writer has any reliable records of his own for this, surely he should have given them, or if he has it on other authority he should have given

his authorities. In all probability the statement is true but without data of any kind it is scientifically worthless.

Similarly, of the Elk (*Cervus canadensis*) he says, "up to a hundred years ago an inhabitant of Eastern Canada, etc." "Eastern Canada" is vague enough to defy criticism almost, since it may mean anywhere east of the Red River which is about the central line; but if Mr. Tyrrell really has any reliable records of "Elk" in what is commonly understood by "Eastern Canada," this was the proper place either to give them if unpublished or to refer to them if already in print.

In the same manner he has treated a great number of the species, eluding specific criticism by taking refuge in vagueness and never giving credit for quotation excepting in the case of some of the Seals. The whole of his paragraph on *Hesperomys leucogaster* is taken verbatim or nearly so from the present writer's paper on the Mammals of Manitoba, but no hint is given that it is a quotation. A similar remark applies in the case of *Synaptomys cooperi*. It is difficult to understand how the writer justifies such plagiarism.

The Wood Hare (*Lepus sylvaticus*) is given as, "Becoming quite common throughout Ontario," whereas in the Northern nine-tenths at least of the Province this species is unknown.

The remark on the Pouched Gopher (*Geomys bursarius*) is one of the most flagrantly ignorant of any; he says, "originally described from a specimen brought from Eastern Canada." This Gopher was described by Shaw from a skin "supposed to have been brought from somewhere in the interior of Canada." The *Geomys bursarius* is an animal of the Mississippi valley—it was observed in Southern Manitoba by Kennicott but it is very certain that it was never taken within many hundreds of miles of the region that Mr. Tyrrell seems usually to mean by "Eastern Canada."

He gives the Black Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) as ranging "as far west as the north shores of Lakes Huron and Superior." It would be exceedingly interesting and valuable, if he would give substantial proofs of this surprising statement, etc., etc.

The avowed purpose of this article is to put on record, my objections

to Mr. Tyrrell's paper and the above examples have been given as representative of nine-tenths of the matter it is composed of; but it is only fair to conclude by indicating such passages and endeavors as are worthy of commendation. Its chief value is as a philological contribution, his records of the Indian names cannot fail to be of use, though even here his besetting sin greatly detracts from the value of the work, for he adopts no special alphabet and uses no diacritical marks, so that the pronunciation is left pretty much in the same state of uncriticisable uncertainity that is characteristic of the paper.

In one or two instances however our author has given us notes that are suggestive of the real observer, and whenever he has done so we get a glimpse of capabilities for doing work of considerable value. I might instance his remarks on the Wapiti, Buffalo, Hoary Marmot, Blue Fox,—though by the way he has apparently not read Mr. Nelson's article on the subject—and on several of the Seals—with quotations here properly acknowledged.

It is always a pleasure to welcome a beginner in any field, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Tyrrell will not misunderstand what is meant for quite friendly criticism, but will recognize the absolute necessity of reproof when so many vital principles of scientific work are violated; and further we cannot but hope that in the near future we may be favoured with something from Mr. Tyrrell's pen that shall be more worthy of one whose travels have been so extensive and whose opportunities and capabilities are so much beyond the average.

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